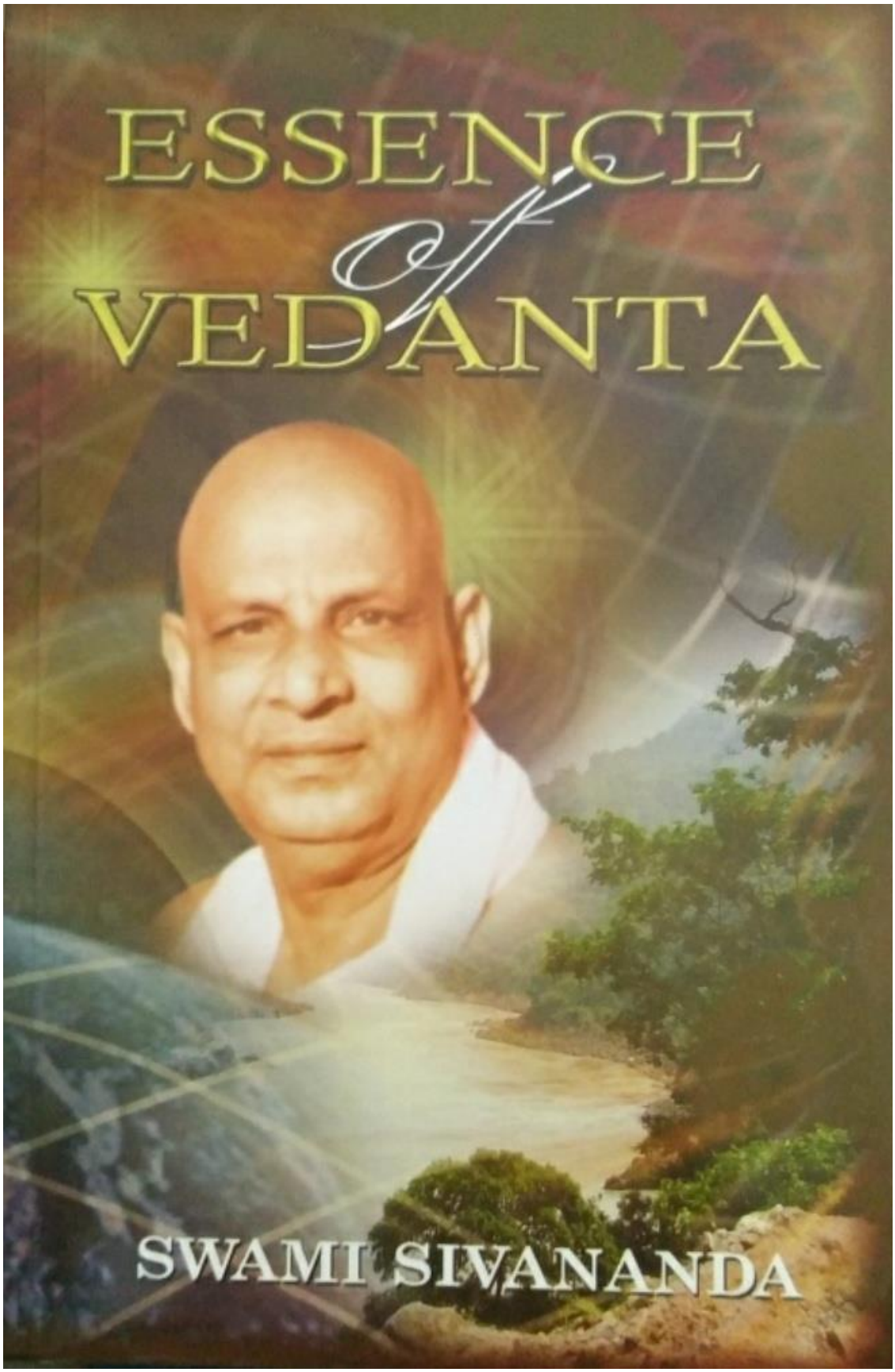
ESSENCE
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ESSENCE OF VEDANTA

Sri Swami Sivananda

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

Vedanta is the crest-jewel of all schools of philosophical thought which preaches the Unity of Existence, or Oneness of Consciousness. It proclaims that all these innumerable beings are, in essence, one and the same. It thrills and widens the heart, brightens the intellect, and makes one experience the Absolute Being, the Only Reality. Goodness of heart and intelligence of brain, which the whole world considers as a marvellous possession, is superseded by the Divinity of Absolute Consciousness through direct intuitional cognition of the Universal Soul!

"Essence of Vedanta" is a priceless jewel from the diadem of Sivananda Literature.

Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, unlike many other Vedantins, is a practical Vedantin. This glorious characteristic runs through all his writings. This wonderful scripture bears witness to it.

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THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

FOREWORD

(*Sri P.C. Diwanji, Retd. Judge, Bombay)*

Out of the six systems of philosophy which admit the authoritativeness of the Veda to a greater or less extent there are only two, namely the Vedanta and the Yoga, which attract the largest number of serious students from amongst the aspirants for spiritual advancement in this country. Of them the doctrine of the Vedanta as systematically expounded in the Saririka Sutra has been interpreted by the commentaries of various philosophical and theological schools in diverse ways which have given rise to the Kevaladvaita, Visishtadvaita and other Vadas, which have reference to differing views as to the nature of the ultimate reality sought to be established thereby. But the one thought which has been found in all the ages to appeal to the largest number of intelligent aspirants is the first, whose exponent was the first Sankaracharya. He being the earliest of the scholars to make a comprehensive effort to establish harmony between the three great recognised sources of the Vedanta doctrine namely the ten Upanishads of the Vedic age, the Bhagavadgita of the Epic age and the Saririka Sutra of the Darshana (systematic exposition) age, some holes were picked in his line of reasonings by the exponents of the other schools particularly, Ramanuja and Madhva. They had met with suitable rejoinders from amongst the followers of Sankara's earlier interpreters of the two schools of Suresvara and Vachaspati. The last of those who faithfully interpreted Sankara's dicta in the Parimala, a gloss on the Sariraka Sutra and composed an independent treatise a digest, embodying the result of a study of the arguments of all the writers of the Kevaladvaita school, named Siddhantaleshasamgraha Was Appayya Dikshit, a South Indian scholar, who died at Banaras in 1660 at the ripe age of 72 years. The revered Swami Sivananda is, by birth, a scion of the same Dikshit family now a Sannyasin of the Ananda order, which is one of the ten orders founded by Sankara and also a faithful exponent of his Kevaladvaita Vada.

Next, philosophy is studied in India not as an intellectual pastime but as furnishing a reliable guide to the realisation of the true nature of the Self and to the determination of the right attitude to be adopted towards the non-selves, in which class fall not only the objects of the external world but also the sheaths enveloping the Self, such as the physical body, the vital parts, mind, etc. Ac- cording to the Vedanta doctrine one must practise "Nididhyasana" (meditation or constant musing) of the quintessence of the Vedanta teaching contained in one of the "Mahavakyas" (great sentences) the most of- ten-quoted one out of which is that contained the Chhandogya Upanishad of the Samaveda namely, Tat-tvam-asi' (Thou art That), meaning that you are identical with the reality, Brahman. Thus, besides the knowledge derived from an external source such as a Guru or a scripture and reflection over its meaning, meditation on the truth contained therein forms part of the means for the Self-realisation. The human mind has however a natural tendency to brood over the non-selves. Some of the Upanishad sages had therefore hit upon the expedient of the constant repetition of the monosyllable Om, called the "Udgita" or "Pranava" and reflection over its meaning as the pure Brahman or the Self taken as an entire unite and as the qualified Brahman in its three as- pects of the presiding deities of the cosmic processes of the creation, sustenance and destruction or the qualified self in its three aspects of the Vaisvanara, Taijasa and Prajna, the individual soul in the states of waking, dreaming and sleeping. The said process of meditation it- self led in the Upanishad age to the state of "Samadhi" (perfect composure or self-integration) in the case of as- pirants of a very high order if they lived in solitude and observed celibacy and in the case of others when it was further aided by the "Upasana" of the "Udgita". That was an age in which life being simple there were few causes of mental distraction so much so that some Kshatriyas could attain Siddhi

even without outward renunciation. Gradually however life began to be more and more com- plex with the result that the task of concentrating on one object continuously for some time began to be found dif- ficult. This led to the invention of other devices as the means for keeping the vagrant minds under control. Some of these were exclusively mental while others were mixed mental and physical ones. Such devices when sys- tematised by experience acquired the names of the differ- ent species of Yoga which have reference to the principal means employed for the attainment of the goal, the reali- sation of true nature of the Self which is identical in es- sence with the overself, the Paramatman, who transcends the limitations of space, time and causation and is also the inner ruler of all beings. Such realisation puts an end to all mental worries, which are the result of a false sense of the identification of the Self with the non-selves and a false sense of values which results from the ignorance of the fact that the universe of which we become conscious as consisting of diverse entities when we are in the states of waking and dreaming is also in es- sence the same as the Self within us, and brings in its train feelings of joy, contentment, perfect peace of mind etc. As however so long as the connection of the soul with the body and the senses becomes revived on return to the state of waking the overself or the self feeling itself as ex- tended in space and time and acting in the world of cau- sation takes possession of the body, senses and mind, becomes inspired with the disinterested desire to make as much contribution as one can, with the powers at one's command through the said purified body, senses and mind, to the uplift of the other beings with whom one comes in contact, to the same high spiritual level as one- self, so that the ideal of the realisation of the sole exis- tence of the unconditioned self even in the state of waking when the operation of the mind and the senses is not suspended may be attained. Towards the fulfilment of that objective, the Yogi has to remain engaged in di- verse activities at diverse levels in the outside world but unlike those engaged in selfish activities he not only meets with no obstacles but on the contrary meets with several inconceivable facilities in respect of men, money and materials to the extent to which the objective con- ceived by him is in consonance with the preparedness of his field of action. Nor does such activity create any fresh bonds for him because it is individual egoism which is the cause of bondage and that he had cast off once for all before the desire was implanted in his mind. The univer- sal consciousness, which did that, sees to it that he is only guided by intuition as inspired by it and not by indi- vidual desires, passions and prejudices, although con- tinuing to have connection with a human body and remains indifferent to the results of his acts whether they are or are not the same as humanly conceived. However even though guided by intuition and remaining indiffer- ent to the results of his efforts he must, since he has to work on human material and accomplish a purpose in the world of physical forms, have settled views on the philosophical problems arising from the present-day conditions in the world of concrete reality which the lead- ing thinkers of his age have been trying to solve by the use of their intelligence and evolve a technique which all those who are prepared to accept his guidance can un- derstand, assimilate and act up to. It is easily under- standable that although the Self which every embodied soul can realise is the same immutable one at all times the post-realisation activity of every Jivanmukta cannot have been moulded in the same pattern because such ac- tivity of each such soul must to a greater or less extent be determined by the knowledge of the empirical world gathered and assimilated by training and experience in the anti-realisation period of his life, the problem or problems to be tackled by each of them cannot be the same and the method of tackling it or them must be adapted to the temperaments of the kind of people to be dealt with and the prevalent conditions of life in each age.

Now all those who have come in touch with Swami Sivananda the Kulapati of the Ashram at Ananda Kutir, feel convinced that his mind must have been unintermittently occupied with thoughts and plans

intu- itively conceived for the uplift of the souls of those whom he deems worthy of being helped by him to come upto the same level as his own in the best and as far as possible

The easiest and quickest manner possible, regardless of the fact whether they do or do not come into physical touch with him, that he has not only carefully studied but also entered completely into the spirit of all the prin- cipal works on the Vedanta philosophy so as to be able to interpret them correctly in a simple non-technical lan- guage which even the novices can follow without much effort and above all he being of the view that mere theo- retical knowledge is an intellectual pastime or a means for earning one's livelihood, has acquired such a mastery over all the different species of Yoga practice as to be able to act as a very useful guide to the Sadhakas of all grades of spiritual development at all the stages in their prog- ress towards their goal in any course of Yogic discipline, and warn them against possible pitfalls in their onward march. He is known to be doing that in diverse ways.

In the first place, he has by the continued practice of the post-realisation course of Yoga acquired the powers to receive and transmit messages by telepathy, which are effective in the case of those disciples of his who surren- der themselves completely to him for guidance along the spiritual path.

Secondly, he has such an inexhaustible fund of en- ergy that he is never tired of contributing articles on di- verse topics of practical utility in the pursuit of the ideal by the readers of the English and Hindi journals edited from his Ashram by some of his Sannyasi disciples under his supervision and also by those of other journals de- voted to philosophical and religious subjects edited from other places by other persons and of writing books, big and small, calculated to assist their readers in under- standing the Vedanta doctrine considered from various angles of vision, ancient and modern and in both its as- pects theoretical and practical. These books he presents very liberally to those whom he believes to be worthy of such kindness and generosity.

Thirdly he solves the doubts of and gives instruc- tions by correspondence to those who address letters to him for those purposes from any part of the world.

Fourthly, although he has a number of well-trained disciples who can and do train newcomers who take up their abode in the Ashram either permanently or tempo- rarily for being trained in any species of Sadhana and in the practice of the art of leading a divine life he himself pays personal attention to all and sundry and supervises the work entrusted to each such disciple and whenever found necessary gives personal guidance and furnishes an excellent example of what is meant by leading a divine life. The work of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University, which he has founded has been placed on a systematic basis and all its extra-curricular activities are given suffi- cient publicity through its Weekly journal which is pub- lished very regularly. The aim of introducing such activities seems to be the double one of giving opportuni- ties to the eminent visitors to the institution to come into personal touch with the teachers and pupils at the Uni- versity and to the latter groups to the trend of thought of the persons outside the orthodox Hindu fold. Some of the casual visitors also seek interviews with the Swamiji. He gives them freely and causes the reports thereof to be published in the University Weekly for the knowledge of its readers residing outside Rishikesh. Fifthly, although he himself is a firm believer in the

Truth of the Vedanta teaching as expounded by Sankara and in the efficacy of the means recommended by him for the realisation of that truth namely Dhyana Yoga, he not only does not discourage those who have an admiration for any other system of thought and an inclination to pursue any other means for the realisation of truth but tries to interpret all the others in such a way as to bring about a harmony

between them and the others from the practical point of view. Moreover he impresses upon the minds of his followers that the path of knowledge is re- quired to be supplemented by that of action, done with- out an eye to the acquisition of any material benefit out of it, in the shape of disinterested service to the diseased and disabled human beings believing it to be a service rendered to the Almighty and that while doing so the atti- tude of mind to be adopted should be one of gratefulness to Him for giving that opportunity and not one of confer- ring an obligation on the needy individuals. Dhyana Yoga is a part of Jnana Yoga. But aspirants are not tempera- mentally or constitutionally fitted to be able to be en- gaged in contemplation without any previous preparation. The Swamiji therefore advises the supple mentation of that Yoga by some physical or mental exer- cises, such as Asana, Pranayama and Pratyahara and even some Mudras (special physical devices) which form part of Hatha Yoga, in order that the mind can be brought under control by first acquiring control over the vital breath and the nervous system, and to the others he advises being engaged in the process of repetition of some short or long Vaidic or Pauranic Mantras which when done with reflection on the meanings of the Mantras enables one to stop the operation of the subcon- scious mind which is responsible for causing distraction when one tries to be engaged in meditation. This combi- nation of the different species of Yoga he calls the Yoga of synthesis.

Lastly, for some years past he has organised the per- formance at his Ashram of what is designated as the “Visvasanti Yajna”, a sacrifice performed by some devo- tees who have dedicated their remaining lives to the self- less service of humanity, so that a reign of peace may be established in the universe as a whole.

The revered Swami Sivananda thus makes a solid contribution to the development of Indian philosophy on new lines suited to the requirements of the modern age, in which the duty of man is deemed not to end with se- curing the salvation of one’s individual soul but to extend to rendering the best possible help to others as well in getting relief from physical suffering and thereby en- abling to make the best possible use they can of their lives on this planet for their own salvation, and in which the duty of securing the welfare of society is not deemed to he confined to the governing bodies but to, extend to the members of the society, because the former share their rights also with them. May the Almighty continue to confer on him energy and enthusiasm for many more years in order to enable him to give the benefit of his knowledge and experience to many more persons all over this earth than he has been able to do so far personally and through his trained disciples sent abroad for doing the same beneficent work in other countries.

Note: this article was written in 1958.

INTRODUCTION

TOWARDS PERFECTION

It is the need for the coordination of our thoughts with the higher life, the communion of our ideas with higher ideals, that is behind our love for spiritual values, our interest in religious matters our desire for holy asso- ciation and studies. This noble purpose consists in our aspiration for moving towards a higher life which tran- scends and comprehends whatever we normally experi- ence in the material plane.

It is the aspiration to grow, to evolve, to direct one- self to a transcendental ideal which is at once real at the time of its experience. It goes without saying, that we have a background of our thoughts which decides our motives, and that background determines the nature of our aspiration. It determines the nature of goal to which our aspiration directs us.

To put it concisely, we have a consciousness of the difference between the nature of our present condition and the nature of the ideal which we have before us. This consciousness of the distinction between the two levels of life has arisen in us on account of various factors. Purvapunya or the results of the meritorious deeds which we have done in previous births is one of the fac- tors which has caused the rise of this consciousness in us, the consciousness of the existence of a higher life and the inadequacy of the Present life.

DISCRIMINATION AND DISPASSION

This we call in a technical term Viveka, a dissatisfac- tion with the superficial experience that we have in the material level and a glimpse indistinct though it may be of the presence of the higher life. Together with this consciousness of the presence of the higher ideal, this aspi- ration for living the higher life, a distaste is created in us, however temporary or unsubstantial for what is incon gruous with the nature of that higher ideal. We call this distaste, Vairagya or dispassion.

An intense passion for the Real, a burning aspiration to realise the ultimately existent Being, includes the withdrawal of the natural consciousness of the visible objects of this world. Viveka and Vairagya come together. The one is the natural concomitant of the other. We have made an unconscious analysis of experience with our minds which has caused the rise of Viveka. When this analysis becomes conscious, it becomes a direct step in Sadhana.

An unconscious spiritual urge is felt as the result of conscious meritorious deeds which we have done in our past lives. We might have had some spiritual awareness in our previous lives also, and we might have thought over the problems of life and aspired for a solution. The present life is only a continuation of the past life. It is not a new life that we are leading now abruptly with a fresh beginning, but it is the continuation of a series. It is just one rung in the ladder of evolution.

CONSCIOUS ANALYSIS

The purpose of the spiritual aspirant, therefore, is to make this unconscious analysis a conscious one. The conscious analysis begins with the perception and expe- rience of what is immediately presented to us. We under- stand what it is that is immediately brought before our senses. We take for granted the

reality of what our senses perceive. We see this physical world. We see our own selves as situated here as contents of this world. We are parts of this cosmos, this universe, this world.

It does not require much time for you to understand that you are in the midst of others, because that percep- tion which you have of yourself is immediate, non-rela- tional. This knowledge does not stand in need of any external proof. The proof of the existence of an object out- side is direct sense-perception. You say, “Here is a per- son sitting before me”, because you see him directly, perceive him and observe him through your senses which carry great authenticity.

Our present life is based on sense-perception. We are said to live, therefore, in a sense-world, a world that is presented to us by our senses. We do not question the authenticity of the experience that is brought to us by the senses, because we have identified to such an extent our consciousness with the form of the perception in which the objects in this world are presented to us or with which they come to us, to our consciousness. This is the basis of all philosophical and spiritual analysis, the anal- ysis of the experiencing consciousness.

The common man with his common-sense takes for granted the validity of his experience in this world. I see this world. Well; here is the object. The world is here, and I have to make use of it. I have to live in the world by ad- justing and adapting myself to the environments, so that I may fulfil the purpose which is in my mind, as the ideal to be realised. Different people have different conceptions of the ideal of life. But this is gross perception which takes the sense-world as ultimately real. It is the lowest form of perception that we have, because it is the percep- tion of the gross physical universe of which our body is a part, a content.

SPIRITUAL ASPIRATION

The spiritual aspirant is endowed with a special higher consciousness of the existence of something, ab- solutely real which is above this experience which we re- ceive through our senses. This aspiration for the Real is ingrained in the consciousness of the spiritual aspirant: only it gets intensified when he approaches the Guru, a spiritual preceptor, and receives the higher initiation from him but it is present there in him even before he approaches the Guru. Else, he would not have had the in- clination to go to the spiritual Guru at all.

He feels the need for a higher knowledge. He feels the need for his being guided by a spiritual teacher. That means that he has already had within himself the rise of this consciousness of a trans-empirical life. It is in the seed state. It has to come to the state of a sprout, a plant and a tree later on, through the grace of the spiritual teacher, and through the grace of God.

Now with this aspiration, with this consciousness of the existence of a higher spiritual ideal, the aspirant be- gins his analysis in the light of the teachings of the Guru. It is the spiritual teacher who guides him in the process of this analysis. What is the form which this analysis takes? It is the analysis of his own self because the one object which is said to have doubtless existence is one’s own self.

One may doubt anything in this world, but one can- not doubt about one’s existence. All philosophical specu- lation, all aspiration, all endeavour, begin with this consciousness of the existence of one’s self.

But here co- mes the distinction between the awareness which a spiri- tual aspirant has in regard to his existence and the one which the ordinary man has in regard to himself.

PERCEPTION

The objects which are seen in the world are consid- ered by the common man to be existing outside his body and senses, and he feels that a copy, as it were, of the ob- jects is experienced by him in his mind. The object itself does not enter his eye or the ear, but there is a transmis- sion of vibration from that object, which his conscious- ness becomes aware of, which becomes a content of his consciousness and on account of which he happens to know the existence of the physical object.

It is only the spiritual aspirant endowed with a higher discrimination that can question the validity of this form of experience. You see a person. But how do you do this? You may say that because you have got eyes. An aspirant will not be satisfied with that answer, if only he has that higher intellect, because he wishes to know what actually is the process by which he is enabled to be aware of another's existence. One may say that there is a vibration, as it were, emanating from the object outside and becoming a content of one's consciousness, but one must go deeper into these problems, for even the possi- bility of such a vibration has to be explained.

You see so many objects in the world, so many forms but how are you to be sure of their existence? No one puts this question to himself, because he is already cer- tain as to the nature of experience. It is only the spiritual aspirant who doubts this situation. Is it true one has a consciousness of real existence?

SUBJECT-OBJECT RELATION

Now, take for granted that you are having a con- sciousness of real things. How do you know these to be real things? The obvious answer is: through the senses. What is the connection that the senses have with the ob- jects outside? Nobody seems to know this, because there appears to be no relation at all, no contact between the sense organs and the objects outside.

If there is no sense-contact at all, how can you be aware of your existence here? You may see a person sev- eral feet apart from you, and you are aware of his exis- tence, without your coming in contact with him in any way. You may say that light waves travel from you and contact the retina of the other person's eyes. That is true, but the object is not brought and kept in your eyes. The object is outside. Even to have an image of the object in your consciousness, you must have some kind of intrin- sic relation with that object.

No one will think for a moment that it is possible to have contact with an external object without involving in that contact a subtle relation, whatever the nature of that relation be. It is true that we have some kind of contact with the external world, though it may not always be a physical contact. There is a kind of relation which is in- telligible in its nature. Otherwise the object cannot be come a content of your intelligent nature.

You know that objects which have dissimilar char- acteristics cannot commingle each other and become one. For example, a rod of steel cannot be mixed with milk, for the two are possessed of dissimilar

characteris- tics. Water and milk get mixed with each other, because they have a similar character. What is the nature of your consciousness which becomes aware of the presence of the objects outside? It is spiritual.

It appears to be ethereal, pervasive; otherwise it can- not comprehend the object outside; and if your spiritual nature, the intelligent nature, should be aware of the ex- istence of the object outside, there should be something in the object which is similar to the consciousness that you have in you. In other words, there should be a spiri- tual element in the object that you see outside.

CONNECTING LINK

If you deny the existence of any spiritual element in the object perceived, you must admit that my conscious- ness, too, is physical in nature. That means your physi- cal being is coming in contact with the physical object. You are not physically in contact with whom you see at all, and yet you are aware of his presence. It is a non-physical relation that enables you to be aware of the other's existence. It has to be accepted that there is a non-physical relation in knowledge. This non-physical relation is psychological, empirically, but ultimately spiritual.

Even from the empirical viewpoint, we have to define the word 'psychological'. What is meant by 'psychological relation? You may say: 'mental relation'. And what is the nature of the mind? Is it physical? If it is physical, it should be inert, and it cannot be then conscious of the existence of the world outside. The mind should be en- dowed with an intelligent nature.

Here we are concerned only with the intelligent na- ture of the person, for all perception refers to an intelli- gence. This intelligence is responsible for the perception of the world outside. The intelligent nature should be present in the object also; else your intelligent nature cannot be in contact with it and you may not be aware of the existence of the outside world.

Now the question would arise: Taking for granted that there is a spiritual or intelligent element in the out- side object also, where is the need for positing a relation between the seer and the seen? The need is felt when we become aware of the fact that perception is impossible without a relation, and if perception is a fact relation is a fact, and if relation is a fact, it must be intelligent, spiri- tual.

When we see objects in the world we understand that there seems to be a spiritual relation between the experiencer and the experienced. But what is this rela- tion? Does it belong to only a few or to all, or does it not belong to anybody at all? Now, if it does not belong to anyone, it must be hanging, as it were, loosely in space. And if it is thus hanging loosely, it will not be in contact either with one or with another. So a third relation has to be brought in to connect that relation with oneself, the subject. It means then that the spiritual relation between one and another is not disconnected from one or from the other, but it is homogeneous with both. It is in oneself, it is in another, and it is between both. Otherwise there would be no objective consciousness.

Now, this explanation of the nature of perception gives a clue to the understanding of the nature of the whole world itself, because the world consists of experiencers and objects that are experienced, and nothing but these two, and if the relation between these two is a spiritual one, then there is a spiritual relation subsist- ing everywhere in the world. In other words, there is a Spirit present everywhere in the

world. Without it, expe- rience is impossible. This analysis is made in the waking state. There is a spiritual consciousness present in ev. Erybody and it is not limited to the sense-organs, be- cause the sense-organs are there even in that state of dream, when they do not function, and one is aware of one's existence even then.

INDEPENDENT PRINCIPLE

That means to say that consciousness which is the perceiver and experiencer, is an independent principle, different from these fleshy organs which are seen out- side. There is what is called 'blank-look'. The eyes will be open, but one will not see anything. In Shambhavi Mudra it is possible for one to withdraw one's conscious- ness from the external objects and yet keep the eyes open. It is found here that consciousness is different from the eyes. The experience is different from the organs through the instrumentality of which he perceives and experiences external objects.

Now, this explanation holds good in the state of dream also, because as far as the structure of experience is concerned, there is no difference between waking and dream, though there is difference in the quality thereof, because one has a purified, clear consciousness in the waking state, and there is a dull hazy consciousness in the dreaming state. Apart from this fact, the structure is the same. There are space, time and objects in dream. There is the difference between the seer and the seen. Ev- ery blessed thing that one experiences in the waking state is experienced in the dream also.

So the question of the relation between the seer and the seen which has been answered in relation to the wak- ing state is applicable to dream also. There is a spiritual entity, if at all one can call it an entity, which is existent everywhere in the universe, in all objects, in seer and in seen, in the waking as well as the dreaming state. How many states does one experience daily? One would find that everybody is either waking, dreaming or sleeping. In what other state can one be? Swoon or insensibility is not a special state of consciousness. It is said to be a state midway between waking and death. If one understands the nature of the three states of experience, one will have answered a very great question of life itself.

CONTINUITY OF EXISTENCE

What is life? This question can be answered by an- swering the question relating to the three states of con- sciousness. When one understands the nature of the three states, one would have understood all forms of ex- perience. The waking life manifests the Eternal Spirit in its phases. So does dream which is similar to waking ex- perience in form. Now, what happens in the state of sleep? In sleep one has no awareness at all. There is nei- ther the seer nor are there objects seen. It is a blank, static, inert, darkness-nothing but this. But one exists in deep sleep. One knows this because one wakes up the next morning and becomes aware of one's previous experience. We are aware of the survival of the same individu- ality. When I wake up and say, "Yesterday I slept, today I am aware of it," I do not forget the continuity of my personality.

It means, therefore, that I existed in the state of deep sleep. One more question is left to be answered-the problem of the nature of experience in deep sleep. We have earlier examined that when we are awake, we are in a spiritual world; when we are in dream, we are again in a spiritual world, because experience is impossible with- out the existence of a cosmic spiritual connection. Does this spiritual

being exist during deep sleep? We do not know. We have no consciousness at all, then. But when we wake up from sleep, do we remember sleep? Yes. Now what is remembrance? Remembrance always follows an experience. We have a memory of what we have experi- enced previously. If there were no experience at all, there would be no memory.

Memory always should be preceded by experience, and there is no experience unless it is attained with con- sciousness. One does not have 'unconscious' experience. If there is experience there must be consciousness at- tending it. If there were no experience, there would have no memory. Therefore, there must be experience even in sleep. But what is the reason for one's inability to experi- ence one's consciousness during sleep? This inability to experience one's conscious existence during sleep is a factor which can be known and removed only by the practice of Yoga.

This is the fundamental principle, the teaching of all Yogas, the removal of the obstructing principle, some- thing covering the consciousness which does not allow one to have any experience at all. The obstructing ele- ment is called Avarana, nescience, ignorance and the presence of this ignorance it is that makes one incapable of any kind of experience in deep sleep. But it is sure that there ought to have been a consciousness; only on ac- count of the presence of this Avarana one does not have the opportunity to verify it during sleep. The presence of spiritual element in all the three states becomes, how- ever, an established fact.

INSTRUMENT OF PERCEPTION

The ignorance in deep sleep state is conceded. There is no clearness of consciousness in dream state. There- fore, one can understand why one is not aware of the Self in these states but why is one ignorant of the Self in the waking state also? It can be logically concluded that there would be a spiritual entity everywhere in the world, but this logical knowledge is not sufficient. Though this analysis has brought about this conclusion, one does not have any direct knowledge of it.

Why is it so? The reason is this: We perceive this world through the mind and the senses. The mind and the senses are the instruments of our knowledge. With- out those instruments we cannot experience anything in this world. And every instrument has got a make up, a structure, a form. The mind also has a form. The senses also are made up in certain forms, certain shapes. Every- thing has got a manner of functioning. There is a small example to illustrate the conditioning of knowledge.

Keep a lens before your eye. Let it be convex or con- cave, but not plain glass. When you look at the object outside through the lens you see a distortion of the ob- jects. You do not see the object properly, because the lens plays a part in your perception. The constitution of the lens is responsible for the perception of a distorted form outside. If it is a plain glass, you will see the object as it is. So there is any kind of a special construction of the instrument through which you see, the nature of the object will be very much influenced by the constitution of the instrument.

The constitution of the mind and the senses very much influences the nature of the object that we experi- ences outside. One can know another as an existing be- ing only in so far as that existence is a content of one's mental consciousness. To the extent the mind allows one to have a consciousness of one's existence, one can know another. More than that he cannot know. The mind has a constitution, a special make-up. What is that constitu- tion? It can know things only in space and time and re- late one object to another object in a casual series. We see that one thing is caused by another thing. This is on

account of the categories of space, time and causation. These three are the characteristics of the frame-work of our mental perception.

CORRECTION OF ERROR IN PERCEPTION

We cannot know anything without presuming that objects exist in space and time. Shut your eyes and think of an object. It is in space. It is in time. It is one among the many objects. It is outside of you. These ideas come even if you shut all the senses. This is the cause of man's finite perception. The mind is forced to experience things only in a particular way. This particular, specialised con- stitution of the mind and senses is limiting our percep- tion. We have to polish the lens of this mind and make it clear, a plain glass, so that there may be correct percep- tion of the object outside.

Why should one experience objects only in space and time? If there is a spiritual relation between the sub- ject and the object, why is not one allowed to see it? Be- cause of the intervention of space and time. Time and space are great factors in creating a chasm between one and another. So there is an error in perception. One in- nermost intelligence and consciousness tells us that there is a unitary principle pervading the world without which perception is impossible, but our sense-percep- tion does not admit it. There is a division for the senses. That division is caused by a peculiar make-up of the mind.

It is by the process of Yoga that one has to transcend these limitations imposed upon one by space and time, and by the forms of the mind itself. The inability of the mind to perceive things as they are is caused by the in- tervention of space and time in perception. Yoga gives the technique to polish the mind, make it very clean and al- low in it a clear reflection, an image of things as they are, objects in their true essence. The real perception of real objects can be had therefore, only when the instrument is perfected. The instrument is the mind, which works with the aid of the senses. Yoga, therefore, is a technique of training this mind, polishing this instrument to perfec- tion.

Patanjali, the author of Raja Yoga, in his second Su- tra says, Yogas-chittavritti-nirodhah. Yoga is the process of the inhibition of the functions of the mind-stuff. i.e.. frying up of the raw material of the psychological organs. The mind, the intellect, the principle of egoism, the sub conscious mind, all these are included in what is called the mind-stuff. And this is to be purified. This purifica tion of the mind-stuff is the first and the last thing that has to be done in the practice of Yoga. This purification is really the cessation of the mind as the mind, it is its de- struction.

In the state of Suddha Sattva, which is purity in it- self, the mind becomes absolutely transparent, and then there is clear perception of things. Now we have a jaun- diced perception of things. We do not see things in their true colour. The true colour of things is spiritual. But now we see their disjoined existence. When the mind-stuff is purified, there will be the perception of unity, for then there is no need for us to take the help of a limited instrument of perception. Then the difference be- tween the seer and the seen will not be hindering knowl- edge. Division is caused by the intervention of space and time. When the defect is removed, the spatio-temporal relation will not be there at all. Then there will be an im-mediate communion of the object and the spiritual es- sence of the subject.

AIM OF YOGA

After the cessation of the mind, there is the estab- lishment of the Self in itself. The real Self is the all-per- vading being. We have to be established in that spiritual Being which is the ultimate relation among things here. That is the aim of Yoga. And this is the aim not only of the Yoga, which Patanjali described in

his Sutras, but the aim of all Yogas. In truth, there is one Yoga, and not many Yogas. The many names which we give to Yoga are with reference to the various temperaments which indi- viduals possess. When we look at Yoga from one point of view it appears to go by the name of Karma Yoga, from another point of view it is Bhakti Yoga, from a third point of view it is Jnana Yoga. The names differ in accordance with the form in which Yoga presents itself before us.

We look at Yoga from our own standpoint, from the standpoint of the make-up of our minds, and our prac- tice of Yoga is based on perception of the constitution of our minds. That means to say, our perception is identical in one sense with the constitution of the mind. So with that instrument alone we look at Yoga. A person who has got an active temperament, takes to the Yoga of Action. It is meditation on the spiritual reality through action Yoga may also be meditation through love of God, or it may be meditation through will (Raja Yoga), or it may be meditation through wisdom (Jnana Yoga). But all Yogas are processes of meditation, meditation on the ultimate spiritual reality which is everywhere without which we cannot exist, without which we cannot think. Nothing is possible without its existence.

A direct, immediate, non-instrumental experience of that Reality is the goal of Yoga. You can, therefore, prac- tise any Yoga suited to your temperament, and all these will lead to the same goal. You will also find that an ad- vancement along any particular path of Yoga involves a parallel advancement along all other paths also. There is no one-sidedness or lop-sidedness in Yoga. One cannot be a Karma Yogin alone to the exclusion of all other Yogas. Impossible. Yoga is not movement to any partial aspect of being, but to the total being itself. So there should be a transformation or discipline of the total being through Yoga.

INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT

One should practise Purna Yoga. All sides of our per- sonality should be disciplined, transmuted and subli- mated. We active, emotional, psychic, and are intellectual. All these aspects in us have to be trained properly. Otherwise what will happen? There will be a re- volt of that particular side which has been neglected in favour of certain others. If you neglect emotion, it will re- bel against intellect. If intellect alone is taken as the pre- dominant aspect, there will be the revolt of emotion against it. There should therefore be complete transfor- mation of our personality through the practice of the Yoga of Synthesis. It is synthesis of the essential ele- ments of all Yogas. It is therefore, a march of the total being of the individual to Godhead, the flight of the alone to the Alone, as Plato put it.

Alone you have to fly to the Alone. Of course, you will have help from the teacher in the beginning, but after- wards, it will be an independent flight to the Eternal. As the great lawgiver, Manu, said, you are born alone. You will go alone. You will take nothing from this world, and, therefore, even when you live here, you are alone. Re- member, O man, your social relationships are only tem- porary. They are only aids in exhausting certain Karmas, nothing but these. This experience of social life which we have in this world is a stage in our development to Eter- nal Life. It is a particular stage in the evolution of our in- dividual being to Godhead. So you must make an all-round effort, not a one-sided effort. You should not lean to any one particular side. A simultaneous disci- pline of all the aspects must be there.

In this process of spiritual advancement, you will be greatly helped by the spiritual teacher, who has got a di- rect knowledge of the nature of the spiritual path. The spiritual path is super-sensible. It cannot be

seen with- out eyes. It cannot be even heard of properly, because it is connected with Spiritual Reality. Even to get training in any particular branch of learning in this world you re- quire a teacher, because you have no experience regard- ing the subject. More difficult is the spiritual subject, the subject of Yoga. The Yogi attempts to merge his personal- ity in the cosmic, spiritual being, which is existent; ev- erywhere eternally. It is not going to be achieved in the future, because without its existence, even our present existence would be impossible.

OUR RELATION WITH REALITY

The universe has been existing since aeons and it is going to exist for many millions of years, whereas the perception of this world by individuals is varying. This apparently perpetual existence of the universe makes us believe that the spiritual being must be eternal. If it has a beginning and an end, it will be the basis of eternal expe- rience. Brahman must be eternal. Then alone can there be justification for our eternal aspiration for perfection. We have a yearning to be perfect; nobody wishes to be im- perfect in any way. There is a longing to become complete in every way, in knowledge, power and experience of hap- piness. Everybody wants to have the utmost possible knowledge, the greatest power and consequently, the greatest freedom and happiness.

We want to exist for ever. Who wants to die? There is a desire in every one to live for ever, eternally; all have a dread of death. One wants to be the most intelligent be- ing, filled with cosmic consciousness, and wants to be fully free unrestricted by the things of this world. We want unlimited bliss. We have an aspiration for Satchidananda. We want to have an eternal experience of existence-absolute, an eternal experience and absolute knowledge, absolute bliss and absolute power. We want everything complete and infinite. And according to the analysis that we have made, infinite bliss or infinite knowledge would be impossible unless we intimately re- late ourselves with the spiritual being, with the Infinite. In other words we must become the Infinite.

To know the Infinite is to become the Infinite, and we cannot know It through the senses. For the moment we look at it through the senses, it would appear like the world. After all what is this world? This world itself is God. God is not somewhere outside the world. But He is not seen, not recognised. He is recognised in a wrong way. We think He is the body, He is the matter, He is space, He is time, He is the gross world, No. This is not correct perception. Human perception does not correspond to Reality. Reality consists in the experience of Chit. Knowledge uncontracted. This is the only thing that is eternal, and when it is objectified and looked at through the mind and the senses, it becomes the physical universe,

So, the purpose of Yoga is to withdraw the mind from objective perception and centre it in Chit. It is the resting of the seer in his own Self. Now, in this world the consciousness is in a state of tension. It is moving outside in search of pleasure. It has to be brought back from this fruitless quest and made to rest in itself. Only when it rests in itself there is experience of pleasure. Pleasure is not the result of contact of a person with an object. It is the result of the cessation of desire. As long as a desired object is not possessed, there is unrest, but when the de- sire is quenched, there is happiness. Happiness has not come from the object. It has come from the extinction of the particular form of the mind which was moving out- side in search of peace. Therefore, bliss is in the heart of consciousness. It is everywhere, because without it no perception is possible.

YOGA IN DAILY LIFE

Thus the process by which we endeavour to unite ourselves with that eternal spiritual being for the sake of experiencing eternal bliss is Yoga. Yoga is the goal as well as the process. It means joining or uniting the individual with the Supreme, or according to another etymological meaning, it means meditation. Yoga is meditation, and also union of the soul with Godhead. When it is taken in the sense of the means, it is meditation, and when it is taken in the sense of the goal, it is absorption in God- head. And to attain this goal we practise meditation. Yoga can be practised in one's daily life. It is possible for one to be a Yogi every moment of one's life, if only one understands the technique of Yoga.

It is possible, as Krishna has said, for one to be a Yogi every moment of one's life, whatever be the action that he may be doing. Every act can be turned into Yoga (Karma Yoga), every feeling into Yoga (Bhakti Yoga), every volition into Yoga (Raja Yoga) and every thought into Yoga (Jnana Yoga). Whatever you feel, or understand, or will, or do, can be converted into a step in the practice of Yoga

How? It can be done only by giving it the magical touch of the consciousness of the presence of the Eternal in all things. Karma Yoga is the worship of the Supreme Being in the form of action. It is service done to the Eternal through our limited limbs, organs. Every act that we do volitionally or intellectually, can be converted into Yoga. When the process of ratiocination is made the in- strument in the practice of Yoga, it becomes Jnana Yoga, which is a peculiar method of directly coming into con- tact with the Eternal in its essential nature of Knowledge. And all other Yogas are aids to the realisation of this eter- nal consciousness itself.

What is our duty in this life? All our duties, the so-called duties, are aids to the fulfillment of the su- preme duty of Self-realisation, the realisation of the exis- tence of the Supreme Being in our own self. The existence of that Being in other persons cannot be realised unless it becomes a part and parcel of experiencing conscious- ness. If you objectify that Eternal Being, you see it in the frame-work of external beings. Then it becomes a physi- cal body. So, one should have an experience of the Eter- nal in oneself in order that its spiritual realisation can be possible. And that experience in our Self becomes vast like the ocean, an infinite expanse of consciousness. It overflows with the knowledge of the Supreme. In other words there is no difference between one's essential na- ture and the essential nature of the Divine Being.

PERFECT ART OF LIFE

With this meditation you have to act in this world. There should be no despondency at any moment in your life. This is an important thing which every aspirant should remember. No grief should be felt at any time, be- cause the moment you are disturbed, upset or grieved, you must understand that you have not properly grasped the technique of Yoga. For, if you have properly understood the technique of Yoga, you will know how to trans form every situation into Yoga. Ignorance is the cause of pain. We cannot be in a state of pain or sorrow if we have a proper conception of Yoga Yoga is not confined to a group of people in the world. Yoga is the art of life, the science of life. Who does not want life? Everybody wants to live and know the art of living correctly, wisely, at its highest and the best. That is called Yoga.

Everybody can be a Yogi at some stage of life. Yoga is not confined to monks and Bhikshus alone, living in caves. It is the art of living an intelligent, perfect life. Any- one who is a Yogi lives a happy and perfect

life, and a per- son who is not at all in any stage of Yoga is a miserable being. He suffers in this world. By Yoga' I do not mean here the ultimate Realisation, but the process of attain- ment. It is any step taken towards the realisation of that end. Of course, to the best of your ability you must act. You must not be slack in your meditation. All your knowledge and power you must put in a state of equilib- rium. There should be equilibrium and dexterity, both together. Yogah karmasu kausalam. Yoga is equilibrium of mind. Yoga is skill or dexterity in action.

You must be adept in action. What is the meaning of being an adept? You must fulfil your duty, be active in such a way that you are not disturbed by any thing in this world and you are ever in tune with the Absolute. That is dexterity in action. This dexterity is the conse- quence of an equilibrated mind. Samatvam Yoga Uchyate. So the two practices should go together-internal tran- quillity of mind and external ability to transform every action into Yoga. Only he who has understood this tech- nique can be a real aspirant. He alone can tread the path to the Spirit, without undergoing any difficulty and there will be no difficulty if there is direct guidance from the Guru

The ancient teachers have stressed that a spiritual aspirant should undergo training for at least twelve years under a spiritual teacher. Only then can there be real progress, because the correct technique of Yoga can be taught only by the Guru. After understanding, one should practise Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana There is first hearing the nature of Truth from the Guru and then contemplation and meditation. This meditation should go on every moment of our life. Meditation should not be confined only to a particular part of the day. It is not enough if one carries on meditation for a part of the day, and then absolutely forgets it at other times. Else, there will be a fall. Here comes the importance of Karma Yoga.

YOGA OF ACTION

You should not make a sharp distinction between meditation and Karma Yoga. Otherwise, you will find it very difficult to act in the world. But if you transform ev- ery action by the power of meditation, then you will find there will be no difficulty in living in the world a peaceful and happy life. Life will be a happy process of spiritual progress if the power of meditation gives strength to the action that you do. Action is an external expression, an outward manifestation of an internal aspiration or reali- sation. I have used the two words: aspiration and realisa- tion. Karma Yoga is the external expression of an aspiration or a realisation. In the case of Siddha Purushas it is the manifestation of an internal realisa- tion, but in the Sadhakas it is the manifestation of an in- ternal aspiration.

In the case of the Siddhas there is no question of self-transformation or self-purification. Every action that they do is cosmic process. It is not individual action done through the limbs. It is a universal movement, which is an end in itself. The Karma Yoga of the Sadhaka is a means to such a state of cosmic realisation. The aim of the Sadhaka is, therefore, to become a cosmic being, to be a Purushottama, the Lord of the Universe, pervading the whole universe. This is the goal of all processes of Yoga. I want to stress the point that Yoga is not something queer; extraordinary or other-worldly. It is the most useful, most necessary thing, because it is the art of the perfect life. Remember this. It is the art of living wisely and it is the technique of the realisation of the su- preme bliss and beatitude.

This is the goal of life. This you have to remember at all times of your life, and you should try your best to put this into practice every day, every moment, as long as you are conscious living beings. Supterutthaya suptyantam Brahmaikam pravichintyatam. A great sage has said: “Remember God alone, the Supreme Being alone, throughout the day.” Do not forget this. The mo- ment you get up from the bed in the morning you must start thinking of God, and this thinking must be there till you are overpowered by sleep. Every action that you do should be charged with your remembrance of God. This is the technique of Yoga. This should be learned under a spiritual teacher and then one must enter into deep med- itation for the sake of the supreme Realisation.

Life on earth is a gradual process of unfolding of the Divine Consciousness which man essentially is. It is to set one’s own individuality in tune with the working of the Eternal Nature, to harmonise oneself with the Pleni- tude of Being. The earth is the arena where we expand the finite into the Infinite. The purpose of life here is to live the existence of the Absolute Brahman! A life dedi- cated to this supreme End is the one of an earnest Seeker through Vedanta.

In the misery of the transient world the ignorant man dies every moment of his life. He is whirled round in the storm of life’s turmoil; he is tormented by the imagi- nary substanceless appearances of the universe. Tons of the loads of life seem to be pressed upon his weak shoul- ders and he sits forlorn crying. He is gripped by fear, de- sires, worries and anxieties. Everything flows; today it is and the next moment it is not. Man has mistaken the love of life for the eternal joy of existence. The sorrow of phe- nomenal life is rooted in the clinging to relational living fed by the misbelief in separative independence and mul tiple permanence of beings. The joy of immensity of eter nal life is partaken of by cutting the root of the tree of life with the axe of wisdom acquired through spiritual re nunciation and meditation.

Meditation is the crowning edifice of spiritual prac tices. That is to be started the moment you start studying this book. Lay the foundation now and build the walls with assiduity of will. Equip yourself with the Sadhana-Chatushtaya. Put on the armour of ethical dis- cipline and moral excellence. Load the gun of the intellect with the explosive of wisdom and shoot the dark demon of ignorance which is the cause of untold suffering.

Life in the Highest Divinity implies the transcending of the conditions that are inconsistent with Its natural and essential characteristic. The Divine Attainment is the realisation of the integrity of Life as a whole and, hence, life as an earthbound individual which is based on devotion to negativity and falsehood cannot go hand in hand with the plenitude of the Real. A thorough-going abandonment of the clinging to multiple realities has to be cast off before the region of Truth is stepped into. This abandonment consists in the renunciation of thoughts, destruction of the ego, annulment of the lower self, anni- hilation of the sense of separateness, emptying and cleansing the heart of its passions and desires in order to exist as the Transcendent-Divinity! When thought is re- nounced, one exists as Awareness- Supreme; when the ego is destroyed, the Realisation of the Truth takes place when the lower self is annulled, one exists as the Immor tal Self when this sense of separateness is annihilated. One beholds the Essence of Existence, the One Reality ev erywhere, when the heart is emptied and cleansed, one is filled with the Pure Delight of the Bhuma-Experience.

Amritasya Putrah! For your own Eternal Good, live this life of the true seeker of the Final Beatitude, the joy ous living of Eternal Felicity! Come, comel O Bold ones! Delay is perennial perdition. Tomorrow will never come.

Hurry up, soon! Tarry not! Practise this. You will get in- stalled in the empire of the Spirit. The Truth shall dawn. Knowledge shall follow. The Sun of Joy shall rise. Bliss-rays shall be radiated. You become That. The intel- ligence gets fixed on the spotless Light of Truth, when nothing remains save the simple Truth in all its naked- ness and pristine purity, when the mind majestically walks into the stainless supreme fathomless depth of si- lence untouched by the ceaseless din and bustle of the phenomenal world. Objective consciousness gets melted in the menstruum of Eternal Peace. The passionate love for life is dissolved in the Immortal. The tenacious cling- ing to the egoistic self is merged in the dazzling luminous waters of the everlasting ocean of Existence. The Divine Being, the Vast Expanse is revealed, the ultimate ex- treme of the Reality, beyond the beyonds, the one Su- preme Goal of life is reached and realised. The thinker hails as the Thought. The individual self is annulled and all is forgotten in the majesty of the Great All Brahmasamstho Amritatvameti-one established in Brahman attains Immortality. This is the Essence of Vedanta.

Essence of

VEDANTA

Chapter I

HINTS ON VEDANTIC SADHANA

The Nature of Truth or Brahman

1. Truth is simple, it is made to appear complex by the distractive intellect. The sublimest things are always the most simple.
2. Truth alone triumphs, not falsehood.
3. Truth can never be defeated by untruth. Truth shall always win victory over untruth. When the path of Truth is trodden, everything else also is done. When the root is watered, all the branches are automatically watered.
4. The path of Truth is a precipitous one. It is slippery and all that is disagreeable. Hard it is to tread that, difficult a path it is. Giants among spiritual men walk over it to the city of Perfection.
5. The Absolute is All. Truth is Absolute. You are that. This is the essence of spiritual teaching.
6. Truth is utterly public. It cannot be hidden even if one would try to do so. Truth persists and is expressed even in the extreme of untruth. The extreme of Truth is the Absolute. Untruth is a shadow of Truth. The world is untruth and the Absolute is Truth. The world is represented by sex and ego; the Absolute is represented by the Noumenal Gnostic Being.
7. His head shall break who acts against Truth and practices untruth. Truth is Being. Untruth is non-being, a mere naught.
8. Truth is not expressed even by Existence-Consciousness-Joy! It is only the nearest relative of Truth. But Truth is even greater, grander, mightier, truer!
9. All is well with him whose heart is turned towards the Truth. No disease, physical or mental assault him.
10. The mover towards the Truth is mighty, lives long, knows everything and is ever delighted. For he is nearing the Almighty Existence-Consciousness-Bliss.
11. Even to talk of Truth aid think of Truth realises one to the height of immense satisfaction. What could be the experience of Its Realisation!
12. Truth is; untruth is not; hence it is wrong even to say that Truth is One, for Truth is Existence Itself and is neither one nor not one. Truth is Absoluteness.
13. The Absolute baffles the mind of even the greatest scholar. It eludes the grasp of even the mightiest intellect. It is experienced as Pure Consciousness, where intellect dies, scholarship perishes and the entire being itself is completely lost in it All is lost, and all is found!
14. Air rushes into where there is vacuum. The Absolute rushes into where there is no ego.

15. No time is necessary for the Absolute to reveal Itself. In the flash of a moment, like a stroke of lightning, the world will merge into Pure Being.

16. When will the Absolute-Experience take place cannot be said. It may be just immediately, now or millions of births afterwards. Hence one should be always eagerly waiting for Its arrival. It will come unexpected at any time.

17. Truth is immense; Truth cannot be spoken; truth can only be experienced.

18. Truth is eternal. Truth is immense. Truth cannot be spoken. Truth is beyond speech. Truth is changeless and speech is change. Everything that changes itself is untruth. Hence Truth is Infinite. Truth alone endures, while everything else perishes. Everyone, right from Brahma down to a blade of grass, moves towards Truth, some consciously, some unconsciously They differ only in the degree of consciousness or the extent of mental purification or subtlety of condition. Every leaf that flies in the air, every breath that flows from us, in other words, every act of universal life, is a step taken nearer the Truth for, Truth is the eternal Home of all beings. Into It they all enter and find permanent satisfaction and peace. It is the ego-sense that shuts us off from Infinite Life and hence the realisation of Truth is the dissolution of individual consciousness in Absolute Existence-Knowledge- Bliss!

19. The Absolute is perfectly scientific, logical, symmetrical, balanced, systematic, reasonable rational! It is not irregular and haphazard. It is not a supra-natural mystery but the natural fact of life. The Infinite and Indivisible nature of existence is not a wonder, it is the actual condition of being even as brilliance is of fire, liquidity of water, weight of lead. It is the Highest Perfection of Eternal, Immortal, Real Life.

20. The Highest Reality is Sat-Chit-Ananda where there is not even the slightest tinge of activity. That is why those who go near It become inactive.

21. Reality is the Perfected Embodiment of Existence, Knowledge, Power and Bliss. These four are only the aspects of the One Being which is Indivisible and changeless. These different aspects of Existence cannot be separated even as the Sun's flames, heat and luminosity cannot be distinguished.

22. Truth is Eternity, Infinity and Absoluteness, Intelligence, Consciousness and wisdom, beauty, love and joy! Sringara-Rasa, Madhura-Bhava, or the erotic taste of the world is a shadow of the Supreme Reality of loving beauty and bliss. Aesthetic enjoyment is a reflection of Brahmananda or Absolute Bliss.

23. Infinity, Eternity, Immortality and Absoluteness are the characteristics of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss! The Limitless

24. All that appears here as the extensive manifold world is the One Uniform Reality existing in this form! As the bright light of the Sun appears as tantalising mirages, so does the One Light of Consciousness appear as many. To appear like this is the very nature of the Reality. These mountains, these rivers, this earth, this vast ether-all these are nothing but the One Pure Undying Spirit! Just as an uneven mirror presents an ugly and corrugated reflection of the face, so does this One Mass of Eternal Existence appear as many due to wrong imagination! All the

things of this world are really the One Whole Indivisible Being! The one Ether of Consciousness appears as the concrete many! All this is One, Partless, Divisionless, Beginningless, Endless, Absolute, Brahman! The origin, the growth, the enjoyment and the involution of the world, are entire illusion! The network of the worlds is Brahman! The ten directions are Brahman! Time, space, things, activities, cause, effect, actor, birth, death, existence, all are Brahman Itself appearing in Brahman by the powers of Brahman! The world is the dazzling of Consciousness! All that is seen below, here, upwards or crosswards, all that exists in the many creatures or within a straw, is Brahman only! There is nothing but That!

25. The Supreme Truth is Oneness! Separateness is for devotion. Manifoldness is not true. There is only One Infinite, Eternal, Nameless and Formless Essence or Principle, in reality, which is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, and That I am!

26. The essence of the Truth of Existence is Beauty, Love and Bliss.

What Is Jnana Yoga?

27. Jnana Yoga is cessation from thinking particulars, annihilation of the feeling of separateness of individuality, existing as One and unified with All of

28. Yoga is the dissolution of thought in Eternal Awareness, Pure Consciousness without objectification, Knowing without thinking, merging finitude in Infinity-

29. Yoga is the transformation of the ego-sense consisting of thinking, feeling, willing, understanding. Determining and arrogating, into Infinite Conscious

30. Yoga is union or identification with the Essence of Absolute Existence.

31. Yoga is intense affirmation of or profound Meditation on the Absoluteness of Being.

32. Yoga is of four types: (1) Service and self-sacrifice, (2) devotion and self-surrender, (3) concentration and meditation, and (4) discrimination and wisdom.

The Path of the Vedantic Aspirant

33. Do not imitate the Jivanmuktas; you are still a Sadhaka. Vasishtha had a wife, but he was a born Siddha. Janaka ruled the kingdom after severe Tapas and realisation of Truth. Krishna lived a princely life but He was One with the Infinite. You are not expected to behave like them. You must do Sadhana.

34. Do not think that you are very wise and that you have understood everything; you know nothing, my friend; you are deceived. There is an ocean yet, and you have not tasted even a full drop!

35. Every breath of yours flows towards untruth; you live in the mire of falsehood and repeat “Truth alone triumphs!” Can you deceive Reality? Therefore, be true to yourself.

36. O crooked heart! You think one thing, speak another thing, and do a third thing. Do you want God? O, how bold you are to claim the Seat of Bliss! Do not cheat yourself; be straightforward.

37. These so-called active spirited people of the world who work for material gains and carnal pleasures are the most deluded creatures. They have forgotten their Real Self. Sages pity these people who are engaged in the external play of life.

38. Those who think that they are doing injustice to the world through their Self-realisation, have not yet gone above the credulity of childhood. For, they do not know that the Self which is Absolute includes the whole universe, and is far beyond that.

39. The world can be saved only by those who have already saved themselves. A prisoner cannot liberate other prisoners. Therefore perfect yourself, save yourself.

40. If He begins to give with His Infinite Hands, how much will you be able to receive with your two hands? And if He begins to take away with His Infinite Hands, how much will you hide away from Him with your two hands?

41. If the aspirant takes one step nearer to It, It will come in a hundred leaps and bounds nearer to him. Such is the nature of the Eternal Being. For every bit of action that is done for Its sake, you receive a million fold in return! This fact is beautifully illustrated in the workings of Bhagavan Sri Krishna for the good of His devotees.

42. Sadhana is practiced in order to attain the Goal, the object or the Ideal. The object is sought because it allays misery and showers peace and bliss. The Absolute or the Brahman, the Infinite Light, the One Goal of all, is Itself Eternal Peace and Immortal Bliss. That is why It is the True Ideal that is to be realised by each and every being. There is nothing else to be achieved either in this life or the other. If That is gained everything is gained; if That is lost, everything is lost. That Supreme Being is Truth, God, Infinite, and everything that you may conceive of. That is What exists and That merely Is.

43. Sadhana is a conscious effort exercised for the achievement of an unattained goal or object. Spiritual Sadhana is a conscious mental effort directed towards the realisation and experience of the Absolute Reality Such a spiritual effort is called “Yoga” in Sanskrit.

44. How clean you keep your house when you invite the ruler of your State! How much more clean and pure should your heart be, O man, if you wish the Immortal Lord to enter into you!

45. It is not necessary that a spiritual giant should have a muscular body. The greatest Jnani may also be tubercular patient. There is no contradiction between the two.

46. Gold has to pass through fire before becoming brilliant and lustrous. An aspirant has to pass through untold suffering before becoming the absolutely Great.

47. One has to tend the cow with care by dirtying his body with mud and the refuses of the cow, in order to taste the sweet milk. The aspirant has to undergo extreme pains in order to realise the joy of the Spirit.

48. Fear is non-existent in Being. The spiritual aspirant is bolder than a soldier, bolder than a lion, bolder than a giant! In truth, he is the source of all courage and strength.

49. The spiritual aspirant is never helpless. The entire existence is supporting him in his arduous struggle, for he is searching for something which is true to all. One may dislike a certain thing of the world, but Truth can be hated by none!

50. If all the fourteen worlds were to face him in battle, the spiritual aspirant would count them for a straw! For he is the Immortal Spirit, the ruler of the heaven and earth, and the universes at large.

51. The road to the excellent Bliss is clothed with piercing thorns. The road passes through a lonely dense forest haunted by terrific tigers. It is protected by impregnable forts, and guarded by multi-hooded diabolic cobras. The road is hard to tread; the Bliss difficult to attain. The sincere spiritual aspirant is one who has become immune from all afflictions and terrors. No weapon that is cast against him shall prosper. No thought directed against him shall ever fare well.

52. The Guru's contradictory statements and insultive words are a challenge and a test for the disciple. The Guru sees whether the disciple is tempted and upset. The intelligent disciple should know how to act under such circumstances.

53. Never try to hide the bitter truth with a sweet lie Be straightforward even if a sword is to pass through cut your heart! Cling to the naked Truth! If you try to sav your "little" self by hiding a fact, the "highest" Self will never be reached. Even if your throat is about to be remember that this sweet world of name and fame is only a shadow, and that Truth is Brahman, and nothing else!

54. Maya will sit in your brain and intellect itself Beware of her snares! Do not try to protect your ego. For the sake of Truth, you must be prepared even to cast of this body at any time. For what purpose are you here, on this earth, if not for drowning yourself in the flood of the Infinite Existence? You must get yourself buried in God Then only you shall live! You gain by losing. You live by dying.

55. All these fourteen worlds with all their inhabit ants and riches, beauty and grandeur, joy and happiness cannot be an adequate price for the Jewel of Self-realisation.

56. The aspirant has to cast off the sheaths, tear the veils and pierce illusion in order to enter the Absolute. The Realisation of the Absolute is the fine delicious fruit existing at the top of a terribly thorny tree.

57. A person who has once tasted even a little of the Bliss of spiritual meditation cannot give it up even for the sake of all heaven and earth put together!

58. O man full of craving! When you intensely desire for anything, try your best to desire for everything and not merely one thing. Do not exclude anything from your object of love. Let All be yours. For yours is this All.

59. "When the mind grapples with a great and intricate problem, it makes its advances, it secures its positions step by step with but little realisation of the gains it has made, until suddenly, with an

effect of abrupt illumination, it realises its victory." So is the case with Spiritual Experience in the practice of Yoga.

60. A dense cave darkened by the thick gloom of ages of sunless nights does not require any time to be lighted up when the Sun pierces its innermost parts. It is instantaneously brightened the fullest extent to immediately when the Sun's rays enter it in spite of its being dark for ages together. The terrible delusion and the vilest ignorance of man is erased cut in toto by a flash of Supreme Intelligence attended with Bliss!

61. Sire! Do you, in your meditation, read anothers' minds? What do you mean! When we enter into the very root of life and existence, where is the question of reading different minds? In deep profound meditation you exist as the Absolute Essence Itself. Do you think this foolish mind will persist even there? You go beyond the mental state and live in the Glorious Truth!

Philosophy

62. A thing is only a force whirling in a particular direction. One being is separated from the other due to the difference in the method of whirling of the Universal Force. Man is different from a tree because the two are different processes of the movement of the Eternal Force or Energy. This energy is imperishable eternal! When two beings have a slightly similar movement of these forces or electrons or atoms, they become friends; when they are identical in movement they merge into one another and form One Being. The whole universe is only a diverse movement of the One Energy. When the whirling of this Force becomes in a common way then the whole world collapses into Eternal Existence.

63. The whole universe is a gradual, systematic and progressive process of the Self-realisation of the Absolute. This is one view. The whole universe is a dreamy and illusory misrepresentation of the indivisible Homogeneous Absolute. This is another view. The former view leads to the more advanced latter view. The former is an intellectual judgment, the latter is the intuitional experience. The first view is beginning of knowledge, the second one is the end of wisdom.

64. "The whole universe is the Para-Brahman"; this is the heart of the Advaita Metaphysics. The world itself is not an illusion, for the world is Brahman, but the diverse conception of the world is an illusion, for diversity is not ultimate.

65. The world is the appearance of Sat or Truth. The world itself is Truth misrepresented.

66. Ignorance makes Existence appear as non-existence (death), Consciousness as unconsciousness (nescience), and Bliss as misery (pain). It makes a phantom appear as the reality, foolishness as knowledge, and pain as joy!

67. We better love a scientific explanation than a dogmatic assertion of facts. The former is like feeding a person with the necessary daily dishes and allowing him to grow stronger and wiser; the latter would be like stuffing his belly with tons of food-stuffs at once in order to give him energy. For example, "everything is Brahman" is a dogmatic assertion and is not intelligible, or, we may say, is even dangerous. A scientific explanation of it will help in divinising humanity and the world.

68. Idealism is of three kinds: Subjective, objective and Absolute. The first one says that the whole universe is an imagination of the individual mind or subjective consciousness. The second one says that the universe is an imagination of the Cosmic Mind or God, the objective reality. The third one says that the universe is an appearance of the Absolute which includes as well as transcends the subject and the object. Naturally the first theory necessitates self-effort of the individual, the second grace of God and the third mere automatism or wisdom, which is neither self-effort of the individual nor grace of God. The Karma-Yogins will like the first theory, the Bhaktas the second and the Jnanis the third. The third is the view of the extreme Advaita Vedanta.

69. The world is ruled by ideas. Thought is the beginning of practice. Thought begets action.

70. The individual entities of the universe are steps in the ladder of progress towards Brahman realisation.

71. Rigorous discipline of the mind through Abhyasa and Vairagya constitutes the method of attaining freedom and happiness. Real freedom which man so much hankers after is not derived from the ego-sense! Man's present conception of freedom is a total misconception and utter wrong. He simply knows that he should be free, but he does not know where lies happiness. He wants to be happy but he does not know where happiness lies. He wants to live for ever, but he does not know how to do so. He wants to know everything but he does not know how to get knowledge. This is the reflection of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, that man wants to live, wants to know, and wants to be happy. Who does not want this? All striving of the world is to live, know and enjoy. But the source of this great gain is life, consciousness and joy. Man is essentially Satchidananda. He impotently struggles to get This without knowing It. His present state is a pitiable fall from the Glory of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. If we want to do anything in this world, it is because we cannot live without being the Absolute. We all,-nay, even the unconscious being-ignorantly striving to attain the Immortal State of Satchidananda, whether we know it or not. Even a dry leaf flies only towards this Infinite. Every breath that flows, every thought that is projected, every word spoken, and even every action done, is towards the installation of ourselves in the State of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, for we are That only in reality. This is achieved through spiritual discipline, which is action against the ordinary current of the world, against pleasure and enjoyment, against indulgence and sleep, against attraction for the multifarious, against everything that gives us pleasure here.

72. Do you think that death is an evil? Why do you say that blessed people only escaped death? On the other hand the blessed men would have reached the Eternal quickly, while the deluded mortals are still clinging to their bodies. Death is only a change of Consciousness. It is neither good nor bad. It is a stage in the process of evolution towards Eternity!

73. None can tread the higher path without fulfilling the requirements of the lower. The grosser manifestations have to be complied with their demands before reaching the Metaphysical Being.

74. Each higher degree of truth is more concrete and inclusive than the lower one and therefore Bliss which is Absolute is the most inclusive of all.

75. The head and the heart of man represent the aspects of the eternal realities of Knowledge and Bliss. Knowledge includes Power; wherever Knowledge is, there Power also must be.

76. Male, Purusha, Atman, Brahman, Siva, signify Knowledge. Female, Prakriti, Manas, Maya, Sakti, signify Power. When Knowledge and Power combine together and merge into one another there is the manifestation of Bliss! Power is only the other half and an appearance of Knowledge and as long as these two separate themselves, there is imperfection and pain.

77. Power is a relative necessity. It is not Absolute. Hence it is excluded from the conception of the Absolute which is mere Being-Consciousness-Joy!

Annihilation of the Ego

78. Negate your ego; deny your separateness; efface yourself; suffer pains and sacrifice pleasures.

79. Deny the wants of thy self, it asks for many a cup of poison. It is a moth that falls into fire thinking it is pleasant. It is a child that walks into the well.

80. Humble thyself, annihilate thyself, if you wish to LIVE!

81. Shame upon the man of mere dry intellect! He cannot avoid crookedness and cunningness. He is a self-deceiver and a husband of everlasting misery. He is far away from the Real. He has married sin.

82. Throw away your learning, O basket of vanity! Give away everything that is dear and behold the Light within.

83. The ego bursts into Infinity or sinks into nothingness. These are the two paths by which the ego loses itself in toto.

84. Realisation of the Supreme State can come only if one is sincere and earnest in practical Sadhana. The lesser the connection with the ego and the greater the detachment from objective consciousness, the quicker the Realisation of the Absolute.

85. The more the ego-sense is pressed down, the nearer we are to the Eternal. The annihilated ego is taken place of by the revelation of the Absolute Reality.

Internal Sadhana

86. The more you give up the world, the fuller you become and the nearer you are to Absolute Freedom.

87. The Self alone is dear. If anything else is dear, it shall quickly perish without doubt.

88. If you wish to see everything, pluck out the eyes of consciousness. If you wish to move everywhere, break the legs of consciousness. If you want to seize everything, cut off the hands of consciousness. If you wish to become everything, kill the consciousness. If you wish to become Immortal, murder the consciousness, with the axe of wisdom. When you get the whole, you do not cling to the part.

89. Cling passionately to the Infinite Being; you will be in want of nothing; you shall be filled up to the brim.

90. Shut all the doors of the senses; sit in the room of the heart; meditate on the Glorious Truth. Drown yourself and dissolve yourself in the Ocean of that Truth.

91. The nearer we approach the Truth the happier we become, for the Essential Nature of Truth is Positive, Absolute Bliss.

92. Love for the particular has to be set aside and love for the Infinite Whole has to be cherished. The joy of the completeness of Being cannot be partaken of in a semblance of it appearing to reflect in a point of space. Attachment to particulars makes us men bereft of intelligence; love for the Absolute makes us drink the Immortal Essence after which there is no more sorrow, no more crying.

93. The child will not stop wailing and shedding tears until it sucks its mother's breast. So also, O joy of my Soul! I cannot stop shedding tears of sorrow in this desert of burning sands, until I taste thy milk of Immortal Sweetness.

94. Victory is won not by might and prowess but by truth, compassion, piety and righteousness.

95. Sattva is light and purity, Rajas is activity and passion, Tamas is darkness and inertia.

96. An exhibition of one's abilities brings physical comforts through objective contact, thickens the ego and strengthens the sense of individuality. These comforts act as a powerful hindrance for the higher aspiration of the soul. Therefore, one should use the wisdom he possesses for the purpose of inner meditations and spiritual attainments and never for external pursuits in the world. Fie upon that wisdom which is used for bringing pleasures to the ego! That is true wisdom which opens the door of Immortal Life!

97. Our ability, our greatness, our name and fame, our different desires and ambitions are to be spread in the world of the Eternal Absolute, not in this world of mortals, not even in the world of gods! Such temptations are to be checked and transformed into a force that reveals the Inner Essence of Life!

98. It is pity to see those people who, before entering into the depths of the Spirit, think that they are born for helping the world. They think that they can bring heaven to earth before raising the consciousness to higher states. They have no yearning for Wisdom. They have gone astray.

99. Service that is "self-less" brings men nearer to Unity and the greatest service is the truly "self-less" but "Self-ful" unification of the soul into the One Mass of Consciousness.

100. One body can be served by another body. One mind can serve another mind. But one Atman cannot serve another Atman, for Atman is one. If the Atman realises the common Being of all with its Self, that is the greatest service an individual would do. If this soul melts into the universal Soul, that is the greatest service this person would do to the world! Self-realisation is service, prayer, worship and all that is good! Nothing else!

101. One has to wear the armour of wisdom while walking through the battlefield of life. He has to protect himself with the shield of discrimination and cut the enemy of ignorance with the sword of experience.

102. The head and the heart must meet together before the Realisation of the Absolute Truth. The whole man has to be transformed, not merely an aspect of him.

103. The greatest insult received before respectable gentlemen is the beginning of perfection. The greatest pain and sorrow and grief is the beginning of saintliness.

104. One must try to get more insults. Even if people think that he is a good man, he should try to make them feel that he is a rogue, and thus get rid of their love for him. The whole world should oppose him. Then only he will prosper. The whole world should desert him and kick him aside. No earthly happiness can bring true Realisation. All should hate him. Then only his soul will be disciplined. There should be no help from the world of the mortals.

105. Let people pour shame upon one's face. But one should stick to the ideal. One should stick to the Highest Vedantic Ideal even on the edge of the doom.

106. The length of time taken by an individual to possess a desired object is proportional to the intensity of the individual's feeling of identification with the Infinite Absolute. The individual which feels that three-fourth of the entire existence is its own self and that one-fourth is not its being realises an object quicker than the individual that feels that only half of the entire existence is its self. People who feel that their own individual bodies are their self and that everything else of the universe is different from them can never live a life. The happiest person, thus, is the one who has lost his personality in the realisation of the Fact that the entire existence is his own being and that there is nothing, second to him. He is the Immortal, the Powerful, the Blissful, the Ocean of True Wisdom!

107. Brahmabhavana is the individual effort on the part of the subjective ego in order to realise the State of Brahmanubhava or Absolute experience, the dissolution of the self in the External, the Pure, the Perfect, the Omniscient, the Free, the All-knowing, the All-pervading, the All-powerful, the Peaceful, the Blessed, the Non-dual, the Mass of the One Undivided Essence of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, the Absolute which is this All; there is nothing diverse here!

108. Stop, O mind, thy plannings! Enough, enough of thy cravings for the body and for the intellect. Make good of every minute that is at thy disposal. Time is a rat that slowly cuts the thread of life. It may break at any moment. Believe not that you will be living to enjoy the objects of life. Death may lay his icy hands on this body and shatter it at any time. Cherish not objects of the world. Wish not for glory in life. Plan not to immortalise thy name in the world, lest thou wilt be immortalising it in vacuum. Speak not to people, lest thou wilt be speaking to the skies. Beat not space thinking it is a drum. Stop imagining. Stop scheming.

109. Finite pleasure and Infinite Satisfaction cannot be had at one and the same time. Where one is the other is not. The mortal and the Immortal are utter contradictions.

110. To say "I am the Infinite" is not Abhimana. To feel "I am the Eternal" is not ego. Such an Abhimana of egoism is necessary for the Highest Realisation.

111. Sire! Can you tell me how to attain Perfect Peace? Shut all the doors and windows and sleep in the innermost chamber!

112. The true philosopher's mind is like a shining crystal. It is able to grasp at once the nature of the Reality. The moment such a person sits for meditation, his mind will fly into the depths of being. He will not experience any tossing of mind or any disturbing factor, for, his mind has been already purified by the fire of philosophical thinking.

113. One should have either a sharp intellect to grasp the metaphysical truths, or intense faith and devotion for the One Reality. If both of these qualities are lacking in a person, he cannot tread the spiritual path.

114. In Jnana-Sadhana (Vedanta or Advaita) there is no such thing as "Meditation on an Object." There is only intellectual analysis, introspection and positive understanding which has its object in the destruction of the ego and annihilation of the intellect itself. It starts with the intellect and ends with the destruction of the same, which gives way to Experience, immediate and direct, transcending the subject-object-relation. There is no such thing as Omkara or anything of the sort in Jnana-Sadhana or Metaphysical practice. There is no manipulation of word or sound in actual Advaitism. There is only grappling with the Essence of Existence through reason or ratiocination.

115. The pronunciation of the word "OM" includes all the processes of sound-production and word-formation. Hence this word-symbol is said to be the highest form of expression of Sound and is the basis of all speech, even the Vedas! All words and all languages are, thus, produced from the eternal "OM".

116. The highest freedom has its greatest tax, the fullest experience demands the costliest price for it. The dearest and the most beautiful of the world has to be surrounded and the sweetest abandoned for the sake of the joy of the Soul.

117. The most precious object of our love turns to be the price demanded by the Immortal Shopkeeper for our buying the bliss of Eternity and Infinity. Our very self, our very separate existence has to be parted with for obtaining the Joy of the Immortal Spirit!

118. Love is spoiled when it is directed towards an object that is defined by space. Love only the Limitless or the Infinite.

119. Let there be that terrible yearning for Self-Integration, that blazing fire of love for the Bhumal Then only you are saved!

Obstacles in the Path

120. Even a slight tinge of earthliness makes one unfit for the Realisation of the Absolute. No doubt the earth itself is the Absolute, but our attitude towards the earth is not of the nature of the Absolute.

121. Name, power, wealth and sex are the four doors to the fort of self-degeneration and imprisonment. These four are to be carefully abandoned.

122. Passion is the instinctive urge for externalisation through self-preservation and self-multiplication. It is the diversifying power which is directly opposite to the force that moves towards the Integration of Being.

123. There is a sudden revolt of the natural physical consciousness against all endeavour to reach the Absolute Reality. The rebellion is so uncontrollable that realisation seems to be well-nigh impossible, for a weak aspirant.

124. People complain of disturbances and failures in meditation due to the impurity and grossness of their minds. A thorough study and understanding of the natural laws and truths of life is absolutely necessary before venturing to start meditation on the Real Essence of existence. Without such necessary equipments, one is liable to be lost in the dark dungeon of ignorance.

Wisdom and Realisation

125. There is but One Immortal bottomless and limitless, surfaceless and shoreless Ocean of IndivisibleConsciousness-Bliss-Mass, laughing with the joyous eternal waters of dazzling, brilliant, luminous Light and divine Nectarine Sweetness roaring with Infinite thundering sound of never-ending Omkara-Nada, ever calm and peaceful and silent and blessed and dashing within Itself with mountain-like waves of unbounded Delight in the majestic grandeur of the Essence of Absolute Existence! There is nothing but That! Thus is the Meditation!

126. Absolute Experience is a state of Self-absorption and not self-expression, for the latter necessitates change and action, which is self-limitation.

127. None is excluded from Absolute-realisation. One realises today, one tomorrow. But all must realise That one day or other. There is no selection for Liberation. All are the Absolute eternally.

128. There are many wiseacres, but few are wise. He is a man of wisdom who is ever in a state of half-sleep, having drunk deep the wine of the essence of life. Glory be to him! We are his servants.

129. A man of knowledge cannot express all that he knows at one and the same time. He expresses only that part of it which is excited by the contact of an external agent.

130. Many times Jivanmuktas put on a nasty appearance and act like men gone out of their brain. They sometimes behave in a very unpleasant manner which will annoy any man on earth. They will live like fools just to get rid of the love which the world may develop towards them. They hide their real nature and move like intoxicated drunkards. These are the great men of the earth; not those who are clever in social manners and like kings and emperors. He who is gone to the Truth cannot behave in a manner which is favourable to the fashions of the ignorant world! Such really great men are many on earth, but the world knows them not due to delusion, and considers only those as great who show a few juggler's tricks before its blinded eyes. The real is ever hidden and unseen. Only the unreal appears before us, and alas! We are cheated by it!

131. You cannot judge a Sage by his words or actions. He will be an ordinary loafer outside but a Jadabharata or a Suka-Maharshi inside.

132. For the sage everything is a play! But he never feels anything at heart except that Everything is One!

133. A Person of Absolute Consciousness unconsciously attracts that part of Existence where lies his object of desire. At once, like a flash of lightning, the things needed by him flow to him like rivers into the ocean, for he is their very Self. The man of Wisdom does without acting, enjoys without wishing. He need not command anybody, for, he already is the Self of the one whom he may wish to command. He cannot instruct, order, perceive or even be conscious of anything else, for he is the essential being of everything that he may try to deal with. Even the gods cannot obstruct him from doing anything, for, he is the inner reality of even the gods. The mountains should shake and the earth should crumble into thousand fragments if he so wishes, for he is the sell of even the mountains and the earth. If he shuts his eyes the Sun will become dark. If he breathes, all beings will live. If he so desires, the whole universe will become non-existent. If he so wills the rivers shall flow, the fire burn and the trees blossom with flowers. If he so desires the entire universe shall now experience the State of the Eternal and the Immortal. Such is the glory of an embodiment of Wisdom of the Truth.

134. The might of thought and the strength of feeling melt into the glory of Experience-Whole. The fini is dead and the infinite is born the very same moment The birth of Day and the death of Night an simultaneous.

135. The greatest men are those who are lost in Self-Consciousness. Such men are too near to God to be able to do any spectacular action. Therefore they at unknown to the world.

136. The vision of God is the awareness of the essence of one's own being. God is the essence of even the Satan. He is the source of even the worst evil. He fills Himself inside and outside and there is nothing which He is not.

137. The devotee of the Eternal is lost in the Consciousness of God, plunges into the Ocean of Bliss. He takes a bath in the sea of Nectars. He drinks deep the essence of Immortality. He attains the Source, the Root of the Universe!

138. O beloved of my heart! Immortal Joy! Where art thou? How can I live without Thee? It is very long since I left Thee. Come, come! I am very restless without Thee!

139. "I am all"; this is the beginning of Truth-experience. Silent Be-ness is its highest flight.

140. There is no paper on which to write the Nature of Truth. There is no pen which can dare to write It. There is no person living who can express It. It merely Is everything that is, and there ends the matter. Every effort to express It's Nature is trying to kill Its Greatness. I am That Great Being! Am That Great Being! I am here, I am there, O! I am this, I am that! I am the Greatest, the Best, and again the Greatest! My Glory knows no bounds! I am the most Blessed, the Immortal, the Great!

Chapter II

VIDYAS IN THE UPANISHADS

Introduction

The Vidyas or mystic meditations on Brahman are described in the Upanishads, mainly the Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka. These are discussed in detail in the third Pada of the third Adhyaya of the Brahma-Sutras. These Vidyas are helpful in meditation both on the Saguna Brahman and on the Nirguna Brahman too. There are, according to the Brahma-Sutras, three kinds of meditation: Nirguna, Saguna and Pratika-Unconditioned or Attributeless, Conditioned or Qualified and Symbolical or Idolatrous. Many of the Vidyas abound in qualitative and relative conceptions of the Highest Self. But, in spite of this limitation, these Vidyas can be utilised even for Nirguna Meditation provided the meditator conceives of the absolute aspect of the descriptions given therein and avoids all dual and gradatory differentiations. Even then, some Vidyas like the Brahma Vidya, the Maitreyi Vidya etc., are highly useful even for Ahamgraha Upasana and Nirguna Dhyana of the Vedantins. Meditation must be practised only on one Vidya suitable to the temperament of the meditator. The fruit of these meditations is Atyantika-Sukha or absolute happiness, free from the pain of birth, life and death in Samsara. Here are described some of these important Vidyas enunciated in the Vedantic Upanishads. These Vidyas cannot be meditated upon without being directly initiated by a Guru (Teacher). They are very complex and hard to understand for oneself without a guide.

Sat-Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Chhandogyopanishad, VI. 2. 1 & 2, where Uddalaka instructs Svetaketu on the nature of Existence.

“In the beginning O son, this was mere Existence, one only without a second. Regarding this some others say-at first this was mere non-existence, one alone without a second. From that non-existence proceeds existence. But verily, O son, how can this be? How can existence come from non-existence? Hence, O son, this was existence only in the beginning, one alone without a second.”

From non-existence existence cannot come out, for, even non-existence is an existence, a being. As regards the sentence in the Taittiriyopanishad which says that existence came from non-existence, it is explained that here non-existence refers to the state of Avyaktam where the manifold world does not exist and from which the existence of the world is evolved. Meditation on Sat-Vidya enables one to assert the reality of the Sat aspect of the Absolute whose essential nature is Chit and Ananda. In continuation of this, Uddalaka asserts the great dictum of identity, “Tat Tvam Asi-That thou art.”

Bhuma Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Chhandogyopanishad, VII. 24, where Sanatkumara instructs Narada in the nature of the Unconditioned Infinite Plenum or the Fullness of Being,

"Where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, understands nothing else, that is called the Infinite Plenum. But where one sees something else, hears something else, understands something else, that is called the little finite. That which is Infinite is Immortal, and that which is finite is mortal"

This is perhaps the greatest of all the Upanishadic Vidyas, for it sums up the entire result of all philosophies and Vedantic enquiries. It treats of the most exalted

Absolute State of unlimited bliss and immortal life after attaining which one returns not to mortal existence. In continuation of this, Sanatkumara mentions that the Infinite, the Self, the "I" are all identical and that this One Being alone is the Truth. The knower of this Vidya becomes the Self-Emperor and exists as the Infinite whole.

Maitreyi Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Brihadaranyakopanishad, II. 4 and IV. 5. Sage Yajnavalkya instructs his Brahmavadini wife, Maitreyi, on the nature of the Highest Self.

"O Dear, not for the love of this all, this all is dear, but for the love of the Self, this all is dear. This Atman (Self), O Maitreyi, is to be seen, heard of, reflected upon and meditated upon. O dear, through the seeing of hearing of reflecting upon and knowledge of this Self, all this becomes known. Where there is duality as it were, there one sees the other, smells the other, hears the other, speaks to the other, thinks of the other, understands the other. But where one's Self alone exists everywhere, then through what can one see what, through what can one smell what, through what can one hear what, through what can one speak to what, through what can one think of what. Through what can one understand what? Through what can one understand that by which everything else is understood? O dear, through what can one understand the understander?

The Bhuma Vidya and the Maitreyi Vidya form the culmination of the entire philosophy of the Upanishads The Absolute Reality is affirmed and declared in boldest terms in these two Vidyas. The non-existence or the illusory nature of the world-phenomenon and the truth of the One Indivisible Essence is asserted. When cause and effect are different from one another there arises the concept of duality. When cause and effect are blended into one, everything becomes One without a second.

These two Vidyas are useful for the highest Advaitic Meditation on the unconditioned Absolute.

Sandilya Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Chhandogyopanishad, III, 1. This Vidya is ascribed to the sage Sandilya.

"Verily all this is Brahman; Tranquil, one must worship it as that from which this comes forth, as that into which this will be dissolved, as that in which this lives. This, the Soul of mine within the heart, is Brahman. Into Him I shall enter on departing hence."

This Vidya further extends its form of meditation by conceiving of the Self as smaller than an atom and bigger than the universe, containing all works, desires, mind, life, odours, tastes, being unspeaking and as unconcerned, etc. Thus the Vidya is suited to Saguna Meditation, though by divesting it of such particular attributes it may be used for Nirguna Advaita Meditation also.

Dahara Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Chhandogyopanishad, VIII. 1.

"This abode, the small lotus that is here within this city of Brahman, and the small space within that lotus-what is there within this space, that is to be searched out, that certainly is to be known. Verily, as extensive as the external Akasa, is this eternal Akasa. Within it are contained the heaven and the earth, both fire and wind, both Sun and moon, lightning and stars, both what exists here and what does not exist; everything here is contained within it".

This is one of the greatest of the Vidyas. The all-pervading and all-inclusive nature of the Self is stressed upon in this Vidya. In this meditation, the meditator feels the whole universe as his Self and excludes nothing from the One Self. This Vidya further explains the identity of the external and the internal, the objective and the subjective, the macrocosmic and the microcosmic, the universal and the individual. Brahman and Atman.

Vaisvanara Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Chhandogyopanishad, v 12 to 18. Asvapati Kaikeya describes the Vaisvanara Vidya to Uddalaka and five other seekers after knowledg of the Vaisvanara Self.

"Its head is heaven, its eye Surya, its breath Vayu, its trunk Akasa, the Apas its bladder, its feet the earth its breast the sacrificial altar, its hand the sacrificial grass, its heart the Garhapatya fire, its mind the Anvaharyapachana fire (Dakshinagni), its mouth the Ahavaniya fire."

Thus the Vaisvanara Self is described as pervading the three worlds. The attainment of excellence effected through this Vidya is proportional to the extensiveness or the inclusiveness of the conception of the body of the Vaisvanara Self that is meditated upon. A limited conception will bring limited results and a wider conception will bring greater results, and an absolute conception will bring immediate salvation.

Panchagni Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Chhandogyopanishad, V.3 to 10, and Brihadaranyakopanishad, VI. 2, and also in Kausitaki briefly. In this Vidya of five fires five acts of the

Fire	*Fuel*	*Smoke*	*Flame*	*Coals*	*Spark*
1. Heaven	Sun	Light-rays	Day	Moon	Stars
2. Rain-Cloud	Wind	Mist	Lighting	Thunder-bolts	Hailstones
3. Earth	Year	Space	Night	Quarters	Intermediale quarters
4. Man	Speech	Prana	Tongue	Eye	ear
5. Woman	...	...	...	...	...

Universe are conceived of as sacrifices with their fire, fuel, smoke, flame, coals and sparks. Thus are the respective sacrifices represented:

The soul on its journey from heaven to be born again in a body has to pass through these five fires in order to acquire its fresh body. Fire disintegrates as well as integrates the body, it destroys and creates the body during death and birth respectively. The soul acquires new and new bodies as it descends and ascends through these fires. Each time the soul takes a body in each of these five planes an Agnihotra is performed in order to get a body in each world. The organs of the body in their relation to the soul are here the officiating priests of the Agnihotra sacrifices. Each preceding sacrificial oblation has the succeeding one produced as the food. One who has got the knowledge of the fires ascends to Saguna Brahman through Devayana Path.

Udgitha Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Chhandogyopanishad, I, II.

"OM! Thus one should meditate on the Udgitha, for, one sings the loud chant with OM! The essence of all things is the earth. The essence of earth is water. The essence of water is plants. The essence of plants is the person. The essence of the person is speech. The essence of speech is the Rik (hymn). The essence of Rik is Sama. The essence of Sama is Udgitha. This is the best essence of all essences, the highest, the supreme, the eighth, the Udgitha."

This meditation on Udgitha-Omkara is one of the best methods of Upanishadic Sadhana. OM is the supreme essence of Sabda or Sound, and Sound is the source of the entire universe. Hence OM is all the three worlds, past, present and future and even what is beyond the threefold time. During chanting and meditation on Udgitha-Omkara the processes of sound as determined by the Sama-Veda and explained in the Chhandogyopanishad have to be adhered to. OM is the highest symbol of Brahman, the Sabda-Brahman, from which proceed the Vedas and the worlds. This meditation can be used both for Saguna and Nirguna Realisations,

Purusha Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Chhandogyopanishad, III. 16. Here a Person is described as a sacrifice.

"Verily, a person is a sacrifice. His first twenty-four years the morning oblation, the next forty-four years are the midday oblation, the third forty-eight years (i.e. until the age of 116) are the third oblation."

One who knows this Vidya lives for 116 years without sickness or disease. The Upanishad says that Mahidasa Aitareya who knew this Vidya said, "Oh! Why do you afflict me with sickness? I cannot be destroyed by thee." And he lived for 116 years. Even so any one who knows this.

The details of this Vidya are given in the Mantras 1 to 7 of the sixteenth section of this Prapathaka. This is a method of meditation on one's own life as a sacrifice in order to live a healthy long life.

The first part of the life is devoted to study, the second to household life and the third to spiritual practices. The universalisation of one's conception of life leads to immediate liberation.

Paryanka Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Kausitaki Upanishad, I. This describes the Vidya called Paryanka or the couch of Hiranyagarbha or Brahma, Chitra Gargyayani instructs Uddalaka and Svetaketu on this beautiful Vidya.

“The soul, when it becomes desireless, passes beyond the moon. Then it goes to the world of lightning. Then the Guru meets him. To him the disciple should say, ‘I am thyself. Then he is allowed to move further. Then the soul passes through worlds of Agni, Vayu, Varuna, Indra, Prajapati and lastly Brahma. In the last world, the world of Hiranyagarbha, there in the centre of the Hall is seated on his couch Brahma. And to Him he should say, ‘you are everything, and I am yourself, and then he is allowed in and meets Brahma.”

Before Brahma is reached the soul passes through various stages of consciousness which are described in detail in the Upanishads. The throne of Brahma called Vichakshana in the Hall called Vibhu-Pramita is described as of immeasurable radiance and splendour. One who reaches this, becomes filled with infinite power and glory. In the Brahma-Sutras it is said that one who goes to this place gets even the power of creating, preserving and destroying the worlds if he gets in tune with the one who is seated on the throne. This meditation leads to Saguna-Brahman.

Akshara Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Brihadaranyakopanishad III. 8. Yajnavalka instructs Gargi on the Akshara-Vidya or the Knowledge of the Imperishable Being.

“That, O Gargi, Brahmanas call the Imperishable. It is not coarse, not fine, not short, not long, not glowing, not adhesive, not shadowy, not dark, not airy, not space, not sticky, odourless, tasteless, without eye, without ear, without voice, without wind, without energy, without breath, without mouth, without measure, without in- side, without outside. It eats nothing. No one eats it.”

This Vidya is the corollary of the neti-neti method of Vedantic Meditation. All phenomenality and relatedness are denied their validity and after negating every concep- tual attribute, what remains is That which is, the Eter- nal, Akshara.

Samvarga Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Chhandogyopanishad, IV. 2, 3. Sage Raikva initiates Janasruti on this Vidya.

“Cosmically, Vayu is the ultimatum of all. Fire, Sun, Moon, Parjanya, merge into Vayu only. Individually, Prana is the ultimatum of all. In sleep, speech, eye, ear, mind merge into Prana only. Vayu and Prana are the two Samvargas or absorbents. Earth, water and fire merge in Vayu.”

This is one of the most important Vidyas which elu. Cidates the supremacy of the Prana or the Vital Air both in its cosmical and individual aspects. The atonement of the Prana and the Vayu enables one to reach the Maha-Prana or Hiranyagarbha, the Life-Principle of the universe. This process of Meditation on the Life-Principle lies through the harmonising of the Prana and concen- tration on the unity of the phychic beings of the individ- ual and the universe. It is told in this Vidya that denying food to a guest at the door is denying food to the Cosmic Life-Principle for it exists in all equally. To one who knows this, all this world comes to light and he becomes the cosmic consumer of food, the Hiranyagarbha.

Madhu Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Chhandogyopanishad, III. 1 to 11.

“Verily, the Sun is the honey of the gods. The cross-beam for it is the Sky. The atmosphere is the honey-comb. The light-rays are the eggs. The eastern rays are the eastern honey-cells. The Rig verses are the bees. Rig-veda is the flower. Honey is produced thus:

“The Rig-verses, brooded upon the Rig-veda. From it, when it had been brooded upon, there was produced as its essence, splendour, brightness, power vigour and food. It flowed forth. It rested in the Sun. That is the red appearance of the Sun.”

The Sun is described here in this Vidya as motionless and remaining alone with neither rising nor setting. From the standpoint of the Sun the sky is described as a cross-beam of the honey-comb because the three worlds are like eggs, the higher expanding beyond the lower, and from the second world (atmosphere) which is between the Sun and the earth, the third world would appear like a cross-beam. The Sun is the honey or the Self of the second world, even as the Soul is the honey of the body. The Devas or the gods have this honey which they do not drink but are satisfied at the mere sight of it. The metaphorical meditation on the Sun as the honey implies the meditation on the world-soul which is the centre of the worlds and the planes of consciousness existing external to it. This meditation leads to Saguna Brahman and to reach the Nirguna Brahman one has to transcend the central essence of the Sun where Brahman is said to be with His Mayaic splendour. One who knows this Vidya,-to him the Sun does never set. It is always day for him, the Light of the essential Soul. The Upanishad says that the whole earth with its treasures is nothing before this Vidya.

Prana Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Chhandogyopanishad, I. 11, and Kausitaki Upanishad, II, III.

“Verily, all beings here enter into Prana and depart from it.”

In this Kausitaki Upanishad Prana is called the Paryanka of Brahma with indescribable splendour. And here Prana is identified with Brahman itself. Prana is Mukhya, the most supreme. Mind is its messenger, ear its door-keeper, speech the true woman, the wife of Prana, the deity of deities. The meditator should rise to the meditation on Brahman from this Mukhya-Prana, which is the starting point of superphysical life.

Upakosala Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Chhandogyopanishad, IV. 10-15. Upakosala, the disciple of Satyakama Jabala instructed on this Vidya by the three fires.

"Prana is Brahman. Happiness is Brahman. Ether is Brahman. Happiness and Ether are one."

The Garhapatya, Dakshinagni and Ahavaniya fires instruct Upakosala on their being the Purushas in the Sun, moon and lightning respectively. Those who meditate upon these pass beyond the world of Agni to which the soul passing through the Devayana is led by the Amanava Purusha. Collective meditation on these leads the Upasaka to Prana and Akasa which reflect the bliss of Brahman. The meditator on these

three goes beyond earth, fire, food, Sun, water, quarters, stars, moon, breath, space, sky, lightning, which are the bodies of the fires, and reaches the Centre of Joy through the Devayana Path, when these are conceived of as subjective and not objective.

Akshi Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Chhandogyopanishad, IV. 15. Satyakama instructs Upakosala.

"That person who is seen in the eye,-He is the Self. That is Immortal, Fearless. That is Brahman. If anyone pours ghee or water on that, it passes away."

Here meditation in an internal process and not objective. Hence sacrificial oblations with ghee, water, etc., are fruitless in this case. The meditation is not on the eye but the Purusha within it which is the essential Soul functioning in the waking condition. A meditator on this goes beyond the waking state and is led to the Saguna Brahman. The knower of this Vidya accrues all that is excellent and becomes effulgent. One who reaches this Brahman returns not to mortal coil.

Antaraditya Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Brihadaranyakopanishad, V . 5. 2.

"This Sun is the same as that Real. The person who is there in that orb and the Person who is here in the right eye, these two abide in each other. Through his rays that one abides in this one; through his vital airs this one in that. When one is about to quit the body, he sees that pure orb. The rays do not come to him again."

This is the counterpart of the Akshi Vidya, the cosmic representation of the same, through the combination of which two the meditation becomes complete or integral; and there is the conscious revelation of the Real through the merging together of the subjective and the objective manifestations of the Purusha.

Aditya Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Chhandogyopanishad, I. 6.6.7.

"Sa is the white shining of the Sun. Ama is the dark, the ultra-black. This is Sama. That golden person who is seen within the Sun has a golden moustache and golden hair and is golden even to the fingernail tips. His eyes are even as Kapisa-lotus. His Name is 'the High'. He is above all evil and sin. He who knows this goes beyond all evil."

One who realises the Aditya-Purusha through this Vidya goes above sin and reaches Saguna Brahman. The golden Purusha within the Sun is the shining Self adorned with attributes and hence the Highest Brahman itself conceived of qualitatively.

Satyakama Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Chhandogyopanishad, IV. 4. 9. Sage Haridrumata's disciple, Satyakama Jabala is instructed by a Bull, Fire, a Swam and a Bird.

"The four quarters are the first Pada of Brahman called 'shining'. The earth, the atmosphere, the sky, the ocean, are the second Pada of Brahman called 'Endless'. Fire, Sun, Moon, Lightning are the third Pada of Brahman called 'Dazzling'. The breath, the eye, the ear, the mind, are the fourth Pada of Brahman called "Having-Abode."

This Vidya makes one shining, endless, dazzling and with an abode or support. The meditator reaches the Saguna Brahman by passing beyond the quarters and reaching the Whole consisting of four quarters through gradual transcending of the Padas in the process of meditation on the symbols that represent the manifestations of the one Brahman.

Akasa Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Chhandogyopanishad, I. 9 1-2.

"Verily, all things here arise out of space. They disappear back into space, for space alone is greater than all these. It is the great goal. This is the most excellent Udgitha. This is endless. The most excellent belongs to him, the most excellent worlds does he win the who, knowing it thus, meditates on the most excellent Udgitha." "Verily, what is called space is accomplisher of name and form. That within which they are is Brahman. That is Immortal. That is the Self. I shall attain the abode and assembly-hall of Prajapati."

Akasa is the highest of all Tattvas and is the great receptacle. Vayu is the great consumer. The Akasa is Udgitha for sound is the Tanmatra of Akasa. Space or ether is the producer of the name-and-form-world and Brahman is beyond the two. This Brahman is Saguna Brahman. Ether is the highest and subtlest principle and hence nearest to Brahman.

Bhrigu-Varuni Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Taittiriyopanishad, third Valli,

"He realised that Bliss is Brahman. From Bliss, indeed, are all beings born, in Bliss, when born, they live, into Bliss, in the end, they enter."

Whoever transcends the five Kosas and realises that Bliss is Brahman gets established in Brahman. He becomes great in splendour, great in Knowledge great in fame, one who knows this.

This Vidya aims at the innermost seat of Bliss, on a small part of which other creatures are living.

Anandamaya Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Taittiriyopanishad, second Valli, eighth Anuvaka.

"The Bliss of one good youth well versed in the Vedas, firm, strong, healthy, quick, to whom the whole earth with all its wealth belongs, is one kind of bliss. Hundredfold and hundredfold greater in bliss in the order of succession are the states of Manushya- Gandharvas, Deva-Gandharvas, Pitris, Ajnanaja-Devas, Karma-Devas, Devas, Indra, Brihaspati, Prajapati, Brahman."

The bliss of Brahman is not to be considered as equal to result mathematically arrived at by a multiplying human joy by many hundredfolds but it is the Bliss that is indescribable and infinite, the

eternal the only existence. Every time it is asserted that the Veda-knower enjoys all these degrees of Bliss provided he is untainted by desire and passion.

Ushasta-Kahola Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Brihadaranyakopanishad, III, 4. 5. Rishi Yajnavalkya instructs Ushasta and Kahola.

"He (Brahman) is your Soul, which is in all things, breathes in with your breathing in is the Soul of yours, which is in all things. He who breathes out with your breathing, out is the Soul of yours, which is in all things. He who breathes about with your breathing about is the Soul of yours, which is in all things. He who breathes up with your breathing up is that Soul of yours, which is in all things. He is your Soul which is in all things. You cannot see the Seer of seeing. You cannot hear the hearer of hearing. You cannot think the Thinker of thinking. You cannot understand the Understander of understanding. He is your Soul, which is in all things. Everything else than Him is wretched."

"He who is beyond hunger and thirst, beyond sorrow and delusion, beyond old age and death, knowing Him who is the Soul, Brahmanas renounce the desire for sons, desire for wealth, desire for worlds, and live the life of mendicants. Let a Brahmana, therefore, become disgusted with learning and desire to live like a child. When he has become disgusted both with the childlike state and learning, then he becomes silent. When he has become disgusted both with the silent (Mouna) state and the non-silent (Amouna) state, then he becomes a Brahmana."

In both of these meditations the Self is to be meditated upon as identical with Brahman.

Uddalaka-Aruni Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Brihadaranyakopanishad, III. 7. Yajnavalkya instructs Uddalaka Aruni.

"Wind, O Gautama, is the thread that ties together this world and the other world and all things. Therefore, O Gautama, they say of a deceased person, 'his limbs become united (because the Prana-Vayu has departed)'."

"He who dwells in all beings, and yet, who is other than all beings, who controls all beings from within,- He is your Soul, the Inner Ruler, the Immortal." "There is no other seer but He, there is no other hearer but He, there is no other thinker but He, there is no other understander but He; He is your Soul, the Inner Ruler, the Immortal! All else than Him is wretched."

In this Vidya meditation is to be practised on the absolute identity of the Self and Brahman which is One Fullness of Existence.

Svetaketu Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Chhandogyopanishad, VI. 8. Uddalaka instructs Svetaketu on the identity of the Atman and the Brahman.

"That which is the finest Essence, the whole universe has That as its Self. That is the Reality. That is the Atman. That thou art, O Svetaketu!"

This is called the Abheda-Bodha-Vakya or the Brahma-Upadesa-Vakya which asserts the one Unity of Existence, the Unity of the subjective Self and the Infinite Brahman. This is understood through its right and direct meaning or Lakshyartha which conveys the truth of one's being the Highest Brahman Itself. The Lakshyarthas of "That" and "Thou" are "Brahman" and the "Kutastha-Chaitanya" and the word "Art" signifies the oneness of these two forms of Pure Consciousness.

Jyotisham Jyotir-Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Brihadaranyakopanishad, IV. 16

This is the Vidya of the Light of Lights.

"That before which the year revolves with its days, That the Devas worship as the Light of Lights and Life Immortal."

Here the meditator is to contemplate on Brahman as the Light of Lights, the Brilliant, Dazzling Conscious- ness. Thereby the meditator, being already the Light of Consciousness, becomes the light of the Brahman-Con- sciousness.

Satya-Jnana-Ananta Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Taittiryopanishad, II. 1. "Brahman is Truth, Knowledge, Infinity."

This is the Svarupa-Lakshana or the essential nature of Brahman. "Infinity is Bliss," "Brahman is Consciousness- Bliss"-these are the declarations of the Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads regarding the nature of Brahman. Hence Truth- Knowledge-Infinity means Existence-Knowledge-Bliss or Satchidananda.

Shodasakala Vidya

This Vidya occurs in the Prasna Upanishad, VI. 4, 5. "He (Purusha) created Prana; from Prana, faith, space, wind, light, water, earth, sense-faculty, mind, food; from food virility, austerity, Mantras, sacrifice, the worlds; and in the worlds, name (individuality). As these flowing rivers that tend towards the ocean disappear, their names and forms are destroyed, and it is called simply the ocean.' Even so of this seer these sixteen parts that tend towards the Person, on reaching the Person, disappear, their names and forms destroyed, and it is called simply 'the Person.' That One exists without parts, Immortal!"

This is a meditation on the process of the highest Salvation of the self through merging in the highest Imperishable Purusha, whereby the meditator gets immediate Liberation.

Conclusion

All the Vidyas lead one from the unreal to the Real, from darkness to Light, from mortality to Immortality. They lead the soul from the Moola-Ajnana to the highest Brahman either through Krama-Mukti or Sadyo-Mukti. Sri Sankaracharya says in his Brahma-Sutra-Bhashya that even those who go to Saguna-Brahman (through Vidya-Upasanas) will ultimately go to Nirguna-Brahman.

“It is a settled matter that those who through Perfect Knowledge have dispelled all mental darkness and are devoted to the Eternally perfect Nirvana do not return. And as those also who rely on the knowledge of the Saguna-Brahman in the end have recourse to that Nirvana, it follows that they also do not return.” (Brahma-Sutra-Bhashya: IV. 4. 22).

Chapter III

SIVANANDA-VIDYA

Khanda I

Nature of Brahman

Om! Brahman or Siva or the Impersonal Absolute is the Source and Substratum for the world of phenomena. He is the Source of the Vedas. From Him the world proceeds. In Him it lives. In Him it gets dissolved. He is Eternal, Self-existent, Self-luminous and Self-contained. He is all Full. He is beyond Time, Space and Causation. He is birthless, deathless and decayless.

Khanda II

Contradictions Reconciled

He moves and moves not. He moves in His manifested or Saguna Aspect. He moves not in His Transcendental Aspect. He is smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest. He is smaller than the smallest because He is the Soul of even the ant, the mustard and the atom, and He is extremely subtle. He is greater than the greatest because He is the Soul of this entire universe and extends beyond this universe also, and He is Infinite. He is nearer than the nearest and farther than the farthest. He is nearer to the thirsty aspirants, but He is farther to those who are worldly-minded. He is nearer than the nearest because He is the Inner Soul of everything. He is farther than the farthest because He is Infinite..

He is beyond the reach of mind and the senses (Avaangmanogochara). He cannot be reached by people of gross mind and outgoing senses. But He can be attained by that aspirant who is endowed with subtle, sharp, one-pointed intellect (Manasaivaanudrashtavyam), and who is equipped with the four means, and the grace and the instructions of Brahma-Srotri, Brahma-Nishtha Guru, on Tat-Tvam-Asi Mahavakya.

Khanda III

Vision of a Sage and a Worldly Man

Brahman is the only Reality. He is the only Living Truth. The liberated Sage or Jivanmukta beholds Brahman only everywhere. There is no world for him in the three periods of time. But the ignorant man sees only the five elements and the forms. The world of names and forms only is real for him. He denies Brahman altogether.

Khanda IV

Superimposition (Adhyasa)

The man who moves in a desert in the noon sees mirage at some distance and mistakes it for water. He runs there to drink water but is disappointed. The rays of the Sun fall on the bed of sand and generate the mirage. The mirage appears as a sheet of water, and deludes man. Even so the worldly man beholds the five elements and the combinations, i.e., names and forms, on account of ignorance or Avidya. Avidya hides the real and makes the unreal appear as real.

In the twilight a man mistakes a rope for a snake. Gets frightened and cries. When a friend brings a light his fear vanishes. He sees a rope only. Even so a worldly man mistakes the impure, perishable body for the Pure Imperishable Atman and suffers in diverse ways on account of this erroneous notion or superimposition (Adhyasa) caused by Avidya. When the Avidya is destroyed through Brahma-Jnana or Knowledge of the eternal through initiation into the Significance of "Tat-Tvam-Asi" Mahavakya by the Preceptor of Brahma-Vidya Guru, he becomes identical with the Supreme Soul. The world of names and forms vanishes in toto. He sees Brahman only. All his fears terminate.

Khanda V

Happiness Is in Atman Only

The feeling of pleasure is an internal feeling. There is no pleasure in physical objects, though they excite pleasure in man. Sensual pleasure is only a reflection of the Bliss of the Atman. When a desire is gratified, the mind moves towards the Atman and rests in Atman for a very short time, and the man experiences pleasure. Atman or Brahman only is the embodiment of Bliss (Ananda-Svarupa). Atman is full of Bliss (Anandamaya). Atman is a mass of Bliss (Ananda-Ghana).

Khanda VI

One Brahman Is Both Material and Efficient Cause

Brahman is both the material and the efficient cause of this universe (Abhinna Nimitta Upadana Karana). He is the fictitious material cause (Vivarta Upadana Karana). He somehow appears as this universe through Maya, without Himself being affected in the least, by names and forms. This is indescribable. A Mystery. This is

Khanda VII

Brahman Is Unattached

Just as the crystal is not affected by the coloured objects, though it reflects them, just as the Sun is not affected by the defects of the eye and other objects, just as ether is not affected by reason of its subtlety, so seated everywhere in the body, this Atman is not affected.

Khanda VIII

Qualifications of an Aspirant

He who is equipped with the four means, who has purified his heart through selfless service (Nishkama-Karma-Yoga), service of Guru, Japa, Kirtana and Upasana, who is calm, dispassionate, reflective, discriminative, fearless, straightforward, humble,large-hearted, compassionate, generous, truthful, pure and who is free from pride, egoism, arrogance, will realise this Mysterious, Indescribable, Unthinkable, Brahman or the Imperishable.

Khanda IX

Kaivalyam

Kaivalya-Mukti or Final Emancipation can be attained through Knowledge of Brahman. Krama-Mukt is attained through Bhakti.

Mukti is not a thing to be achieved or attained. It is already there. You will have to know that you are free, by removing the veil of Ignorance.

Khanda X

Method of Meditation

I am all-Blissful Siva.	OM!
I am Immortal Brahman	.OM!
I am Existence-Knowledge-Bliss-Absolute (Satchidananda-Svarupoham)	OM!
I am Infinite (Ananta)	OM!
I am Eternal (Nitya)	OM!
I am ever Pure (Suddha)	OM!
I am Perfect (Siddha).	OM!
I am ever Free (Mukta)	OM!
I am Unattached (Asanga)	OM!
I am Witness (Sakshi)	OM!
I am Non-doer (Akarta).	OM!
I am Non-enjoyer (Abhokta)	OM!

I am not this Prana OM!

Satchidananda-Svarupoham. OM!

This is the Quintessence of Kevala Advaita Vedanta or Absolute Monism.

Thus ends the glorious Sivanand-Vidya! OM!

SIVANANDA-VIDYA

(Commentary)

Introduction

The Science of Knowledge of the Reality is the King of all sciences-Rajavidya' as the Gita terms it. It is the Kingly Secret (Rajaguhya), the best and the end of all sciences. It is the only real science in the strictest sense of the term; all others are mere semblance of science. It is the rational way of entering into the Ultimate Truth, the Original Cause of things. This is the one aim of the ontological (Brahma-Tattva) researches made since many a generation of Seers and Sages.

Vedanta or Brahmavidya is the crest-jewel of all schools of philosophical thought which preaches the Unity of Existence, or Oneness of Consciousness. It proclaims that all these innumerable beings are in Essence one and the same, that "there is no such thing as diversity" (Brih. Up. IV. 4. 19), that "all this is Brahman" (Chh. Up. III. 14. 1). It thrills and widens the heart, brightens the intellect, and makes one experience the Absolute Being, the Only Reality. One does not feel that he is different from other, that he is an individual at all by himself and feels that there is nothing except "his own Being". One does not, after the Realisation of the Eternal Truth. Experience this manifold universe of names and forms, of pairs of opposites. He does not even appear to be moved by external changes of talks and actions. One does not, having adhered to the practical principles of Wisdom (Jnana), feel that anything at all is serious in this world, that anything whatsoever is of any importance, that anything at all cause any can substantial effect in the appearance of this phantom of phenomena. Having been established in the glorious Seat of Knowledge of the Self (Atman or Brahman), one has not got to experience the misery of 'Samsara', one becomes completely divinised in nature! Goodness of heart and intelligence of brain which the whole world considers as a marvellous possession is superseded by the Divinity of Absolute Consciousness through direct intuitional cognition of the Universal Soul!

Anger, hatred, and the like, fade away into an airy nothing; desire, attachment and delusion vanish like goblins experienced in dreams; likes and dislikes become fictitious expressions, on the Ambrosia of Wisdom being tasted at least once! There remains nothing more to be known. Actions, emotions and willings become impotent of producing any binding effect, the great illusory dramatic Jugglery of life in the world becomes a fairy tale in the city of the clouds, on the Spiritual Spark of Wisdom having been shot out into practical experience. Every trouble, every disappointment, every depression or the other side of it appearing to arise in the mind, becomes known to be simply an appearance of the sport of Maya in the theatre of the universe, every act and movement, an exhibition of individual ignorance! One

does not become a victim to the luring call of the senses, one is able to discriminate that all objects of sense-enjoyment are nothing but the one or the other aspect of appearance in the Absolute Consciousness.

Brahma-Jnana leads to the Glory of Moksha. The Mundaka Upanishad extols the Bliss of Salvation in the following words: “Who know that Supreme State of Brahman, founded on which the whole world shines radiantly, who, being without desire, worship that Purusha, who are wise, they pass beyond the seed of rebirth here. Of him whose desire is satisfied, who is a perfect soul, all desires even here on earth vanish away. Attaining Him, the Seers who are satisfied with Knowledge, who are perfected souls, free from passion, tranquil-attaining Him who is the universally omnipresent, those wise, devout souls enter into the All Itself. They who have ascertained the meaning of the Vedanta-Knowledge, Ascetics with purified natures through the application of (Sannyasa-Yoga), they in the State of Brahman at the renunciation end of time are all liberated beyond death. Gone are the fifteen parts (of the microcosm) according to their station even all the sense-organs in their corresponding divinities! One’s deeds and the self that consists of understanding, all become united in the Supreme Imperishable. As the flowing rivers in the ocean disappear, quitting name and form, so the Knower, being liberated from name and form, goes unto the Supreme Purusha, higher than the high. He who knows that Supreme Brahman becomes Brahman Itself. In his family no one ignorant of Brahman arises. He crosses over sorrow. He crosses over sin Liberated from the knots of the heart, he becomes Immortal!” (Mundaka Upanishad-III-2)

Thus is the Glory of the Wisdom of the Reality. Here do we find expressed in its complete form the Knowledge of the Infinite ‘Bhuma’ or ‘Brahman’ in the glorious sentenecs of the ‘Sivananda-Vidya’, the Science of the Blessed, the Infinite Brahman!

Khanda I Nature of Brhman

Brahman is Siva or Blessed, Auspicious. The Mandukya Upanishad calls Brahman as “Santam, Sivam, Advaitam” (Mand. Up. VII). Brahman is ‘Santa’ or peaceful, ‘Siva’ or Blessed (auspicious), ‘Advaita’ or Non-Dual. The word ‘Siva’ is indicative of the Tranquillity of which Brahman is the embodiment in Fullness “Brimh” is to expand into Infinity, and the word “Brahman” is indicative of Completeness, Perfection Infinity, Eternity, and Absoluteness of Being which is of the Nature of Intelligence and Bliss, wherein all Power is hidden!

Brahman is the Source and Substratum, the Basis for all the play of phenomenal relativity. Just as the Sun is the Controller and the Basis for all the business of life in the world and also the Support of the mirages appearing in deserts, just as the Ocean is the Support of the many waves rolling on it, just as the glowing lamp is the Support of the light scattered around it, just as the burning flame of fire is the Supporter of the sparks flung around it, just as the moon is the Support of the beams surging from it, just as the great Ether is the Support of the ether in jar, etc, just as the dreamer is the Support of all the objects of his dream in the mind, so is Brahman the Prop or Support of the sport of Illusion as the diverse appearances of the universe. “Who controls the earth from within-He is thy Soul, the Inner Controller, the Immortal.” (Brih. Up. III-7. 3).

Brahman is the Impersonal Absolute “Amurtam (Brih. Up. II-3. 1), only One without a second, “Ekameva Adviteeyam” (Chh. Up. VI-2. 1), the ONLY EXISTENCE, “*Ekam Sa*t’ (Rig-Veda I-164. 46).

Brahman is the Source of the Vedas "*Asya Mahat Bhutasya Nisvasitametad Yadriguedo Yajurvedah Samavedotharvaangirasah* (Brih. Up. II-4. 10). "From this Great Being has been breathed forth that which is Rig-Veda, Yajur Veda, Atharva-angirasa"-thus Sama says Veda, and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. Veda is the Sabda-Brahman or the first evolute. Veda is Infinite-"Anantaa Vai-Vedah'-there is no end for Vedas because they are the expositions of the Nature and Glory of Brahman which is Infinite, Endless. "Vid" is "to know", "Veda" is "Knowledge" of the Absolute Brahman, through the "Sravana" or "hearing" of whose Eternal truths from a Brahma-Nishtha Guru, and meditation on those truths, one is rendered fit to realise that Absolute Brahman. The first evolute was the great Sound or "Nada" of "Omkara" from which all other principles evolved subsequently. From "OM" the Vedas came forth through the medium of Brahman. "OM", thus, is the quintessence of the Vedas and represents Brahman in the best conceivable way. "OM" includes everything here,-"OM"-this syllable is this whole world... the past, the present and the future-everything is the word OM!... "for truly, everything here is Brahman." (Mandukya Up. I, II). "OM" is the Support for Meditation on Brahman. The loud chant of "OM" swallows up the whole universe in one's consciousness and asserts the Non-dual Brahman alone, the Absolute Being.

From Him this world proceeds. "Janmaadyasya Yatak (Brahmasutras, 1.1.2). This Sutra of the Uttara-Mimamsa says that "the origin, etc., of this is from Whom", i.e., the origin, preservation and destruction of this universe is due to Brahman only. Brahman projects the universe just as the Sun projects the mirage, sustains the world just as the mirage is sustained at noon, and dissolves the universe in the end just as the mirage is absorbed at the time of sun-set. All the creatures, all the worlds are created or rather projected by Brahman from the Body of Brahman, and the same Brahman is sustained by Brahman and the very Brahman is dissolved or destroyed by Brahman into Brahman. All this is merely a play or Divine Jugglery. All the creature; breathe and live in Brahman, they move and have their being in Brahman for Brahman alone is all this that appears, and there is nothing whatsoever, other than that one Essence existing everywhere at all times. "He created this whole world, whatever there is here. Having created it, he entered into it. Having entered it, he became both the real and the unreal, both the defined and the undefined, both the based and the non-based, both the conscious and the unconscious. He became whatever there is here." (Taitt. Up. II-6). "That, whence beings here are born, that by which when born, they live, that into which on deceasing they enter... That is Brahman", (Taitt. Up. III. 1. 1.)

Brahman is Eternal, Nitya, Everlasting. Brahman alone is the entire Existence and hence Brahman cannot be destroyed. The Actor, action and the thing acted are all Brahman in one. Brahman cannot change, for the very consciousness of the process of change is Brahman. Brahman is single, non-Dual and so is Self-Existent. There is nothing for Brahman to depend upon. Brahman is Absolute, All-in-All! "Tat Satyam"-That is Existence (Chh. Up. VI-16, 3). "Existence alone was in the beginning" (Chh. Up. VI-2-1). Brahman is Self-luminous, or Chit. Chit is Intelligence or Consciousness. The Nature of Brahman is Absolute Consciousness, Pure Awareness Supreme, the Light of Knowledge. It shines by Itself, without any external agency, for it is the Sole Existence, and the Source of all Light, all Consciousness! It is Self-contained, Full, Perfect and Blissful. It is the embodiment of Perfection and joy without decay. Brahman is Full, the 'Bhuma' (Chh. Up. VII-23), the unconditioned. "That is Full, this is full. From the Full, the full does proceed. Withdrawing the full from the Full, even Full then Itself remains." (Brih. Up. V-1. 1) very

Time, Space and Causation are only appearances of Brahman in the Being of Brahman, and hence have no separate existence by themselves. Brahman is both Transcendent and Immanent. Brahman includes

everything, and yet is beyond everything. Brahman is Indescribable Greatness and Glory! It is birthless, deathless and decayless. For all changes are fused into Its Supreme Being and there is nothing which It is not. Changes like birth and death are only relative terms and have no meaning in the Absolute point of view. Time, Space and Causation also are only relative terms expressing unreal things to the ignorant people, and when the Light of Wisdom dawns, there is no world, there is no duality and change, there is the Non-dual Brahman alone in Its own Glory! "All this world is the dazzling of Consciousness" (Yoga-vasishtha. VI b. 213. 18.) Hence Brahman cannot be attributed with any quality, change or action. "Verily, that great, unborn, Soul, undecaying, undying immortal, fearless, is Brahman" (Brih. Up. IV-4. 25).

Khanda II Contradiction Reconciled

"Tadejati, Tannaijati (Isa Up. V). "It moves and moves not." Brahman is all Full, Absolute and spaceless and hence does not move. Movement is possible only when there is space for purpose of change and action. But the Spaceless and the Timeless Completeness Brahman cannot move, for motion is only Brahman appearing. But in the manifested aspect, where there is individuation, there is the possibility of motion and action, appearance of power and separateness. In this aspect Brahman appears as the Lord of the universe and apparently separates Himself from the State of Absoluteness of Being and moves. But in the State of Truth, He is Santam, Sivam, Advaitam, and moves not.

"Anoraneeyan Mahato Maheeyan' (Katha Up. II. 20). "He is smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest". Even the smallest thing occupies a portion of space and every speck of space is aglow with the presence of the Imperishable Brahman, for there is no space in all the three periods of time where Brahman is not. Even the smallest thing cannot but exist, and Existence is Brahman. Brahman is extremely subtle for It pervades and is immanent in everything for everything is Brahman! The Sruti says: "He is Brahman, He is Indra, He is Prajapati, He is all gods, (He is) all these five elements... all this is guided by Consciousness, is based on Consciousness. The world is guided by Conscious- ness. Consciousness is its basis. Consciousness is Brahman."

Brahman is Infinite, for It pervades all and is the being of all. It is greater than the greatest because the greatest is only a part-manifestation of it. A thing is greatest only in the relative phenomenal sense and it is not greatest from the point of view of Brahman which transcends everything. The Rig-Veda says, "having covered up all the world, It stretches ten cubits above." This is only to show that Brahman pervades and covers up all that is here and is beyond everything. Brahman is the Great Expansion and is the Entirety of Being. Hence there cannot be anything greater than Brahman which is the greatest, the All.

Brahman is nearer than the nearest and farther than the farthest of things. "Tad Doore Tadvantike (Isa Up. V). The thirsty aspirant feels the presence of Brahman alone in his own being and hence to him Brahman is not only the nearest but is his very existence itself. "Ayamatma Brahma' (Ait. Up. III-3). "This Selfis Brahman". Brahman is the Self of everything. Hence it is the nearest.

Brahman is farther to those who worldly-minded. Worldly persons perceive only physical bodies and cannot cognise the presence of the All-pervading Essence. They doubt the existence of the superphysical being and search for that Great Being in the external world. This leads to atheism in them, and so it is equal to Its being for, far from their reach. They get births after births and roll in the meshes of Samsara

due to gross ignorance of the Nature of the Absolute Brahman. They remain in that state of misery until the dawn of Wisdom of the Self. The farness of Brahman is indicated by Its Infiniteness. Brahman is Illimitable, Indivisible, and hence, to express in relative word, is farther than the farthest. “Brahman is Truth, Intelligence, Infinity” (Taitt. Up. II-1). Are

Brahman cannot he comprehended through the mind and the senses. The mind and the senses have a tendency to objectification and losing consciousness of the subjective existence. Existence is an absolute identity of the subjective and the objective states of Consciousness in one, an indivisible oneness of the cogniser and the cognised, together with cognition. The One Existence, in a mysterious way, divides Itself apparently as the cogniser, cognition and the congised, but so long as there is this apparent difference of perception, etc., there is no hope of Liberation from bondage. Unconscious identity (as in deep sleep) is of no use for the purpose of salvation. There should be a conscious Unity or Absoluteness of Existence, and this consciousness is that of Moksha or Liberation, though, in the case of certain special beings, there may be the sense of “being” or “Self-consciousness.” This is the case with the great beings, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, with perfect Avataras like Krishna and sages like Vasishtha, who do not lose consciousness of their identity with Brahman in any condition. They are, therefore, not bound beings like men and other creatures who do not possess consciousness of such an identity. The minds and the senses of the bound ones run outward being extrovert in nature, and hence are incapable of experiencing Brahman, the Subjective Infinity. Brahman cannot he perceived by the outgoing gross mind. When there is cessation from objectification, there is Realisation of Brahman-Consciousness and Bliss. Brahman cannot be “perceived” but can only be “experienced.” It is not an object of cognition. That is why the mind and the senses which are the instruments of perception do not hold good in the Realisation of Brahman. “Not by speech, not by mind, not by sight can He be apprehended” (Katha Up. VI. 12).

But a pure heart with a subtle intellect can understand Brahman. “By the mind, indeed, is this to be attained.” (Katha Up. IV. 11). The faculty of reasoning through the subtle intellect has got very close affinities with the Essential Inner Nature. “Vijnanam Brahmeti Vyajanaťt (Taitt. Up. III. 5). “The intellect was known to be Brahman.” The intellect is a form of the power of mentation itself, only with a different name, having a different function to perform, but it must not be forgotten that the intellect is the subtle aspect of the otherwise gross power of cognition. It is subtler than the gross mind, subtler than emotions and movements in the physical plane of life. That is why ‘Jnana’ paves the way for a very quick process of realising the Truth, better than the other aspects of the mind namely, action and emotion. But this is not a common rule, and on the other hand, Jnana is a special gift to a being acquired through strenuous efforts since births innumerable. But subtler and truer as it is than all phenomenal experiences, ‘Jnana’ is the direct Intuition of the Absolute, where reasoning has no worth whatever, which is the opening out of the Soul to its real Nature from its Jivahood. ‘Jnana’ thus, is the bold and independent method of realising the Absolute through ratiocination and discrimination! Yoga that wants nothing whatsoever, that wants not even to move in the slightest manner having realised the futility of all that seems to exist, i attained through the practice of the four means Discrimination, Renunciation, Tranquillity Self-restraint, Cessation from activity, Fortitude, Faith, Concentration and intense longing for Liberation from bondage. The Jnani does not act, does not pray, but affirms his own Absolute Being, Intelligence and Bliss having found no meaning in anything that happens here This Strength to affirm the Reality comes only to one who is purified in heart and will, and not to one who is passionate and greedy, egoistic and proud! Without proper preparation for this kind of practice, one should feel he is walking

along the edge of a sharp sword or a razor, if he dares to affirm the Reality! Only chivalrous aspirants with a purified heart, with universal vision of equanimity towards all beings, with perfect dispassion for things of this and the other world, with a strong will, can dare to step into the Path of Wisdom-Meditation (Jnana Yoga). Others have to weep afterwards if they ignorantly try to practise Jnana-Yoga without first getting established in Viveka, Vairagya, Shadsampat and Mumukshutva.

The grace and instructions of a Brahma-Srotriya and Brahma-Nishtha Guru is important for starting the Practice of Wisdom Meditations. The Guru should initiate the aspirant into the highest mystery of Existence, namely, the identity of the subjective consciousness with the Objective or the Absolute through instruction of the great sentence of Identity enunciated in the Chhandogya Upanishad, "Tat Tua Asi," "That thou art," declaring that Brahman and Atman are One in Essence. "For the sake of this Knowledge, let him go, fuel in hand, to a Spiritual Teacher who is learned in the scriptures and established in Brahman (Mund. Up. I. 2-12). "Acharyavan Purusho Veda" (Chh Up. IV. 14-2) "One with a Preceptor knows" the Truth of Brahman. "Such a knowing Teacher, to one who has approached properly, whose thought is tranquillised who has reached peace, teaches in its very truth that Brahman whereby one knows the Imperishable, the Purusha, the Reality," (Mund. Up. I. 2-13). "Know that (Knowledge) by long prostration, by question and service; the wise who have realised the Truth will instruct thee in that Knowledge" (Bhag. Gita IV-34). Thus do the Srutis and the Smritis declare the importance of getting initiated by an able Guru or Spiritual Preceptor into the Truth of Brahma-Jnana. Without it, the aspirant is likely to be misled in the advanced stages of Sadhana, and he is therefore prone to downfall. This fact is well illustrated in the fourteenth Khanda of the Sixth chapter of the Chhandogya Upanishad. The instructions of an experienced Person guide the aspirant along the precipitous path to Final Liberation.

Khanda III The Vision of a Sage and a Worldly Man

Brahman alone is the Reality. "Sarvam Brahma," "All this (that appears) is Brahman" (Chh. Up. III. 14. 1). Also, "Brahman, the Immortal is before, Brahman behind, to right and to left, stretched forth below and above, Brahman, indeed, is this whole world, this widest extent" (Mund Up. II. 2-11). The Liberated Sage sees Brahman only everywhere, for "everything is Brahman" (Mand. Up. II). He does not perceive the manifold world in all the three periods of time. Even Time and space vanish from his experience. He experiences only the Infinite Bliss of Brahman. Partiteness or divisibility of the One Existence is realised to be unreal by the wise knower, "Ekam Sad Vipraa Bahudha Vadanti' (Rig-Veda). "The One Truth, the wise diversely speak of." "All is Brahman alone, the Single," says Dattatreya in his Avadhuta-Gita, "I do not perceive anything else! I am the Impersonal Formless Absolute. I am all-pervading in my very essential Nature!" All this is mere "Satchidananda" or Existence-Knowledge- Bliss-Absolute. That is the only Reality. All else is false, is a mere phantasmagoria arisen in the mind! This is the truth. The Liberated Sage, the Jivanmukta experiences this Infinite Joy and is no more bound by Karma or Maya.

But the worldly man, the Jiva attached to intense objectification, stuck up to gross sensuality and activity, perceives only the physical world and the physical body bereft of Spiritual Consciousness. Thereby he gets himself bound to world-cycles and suffers from the bondage of Samsara. He does not know how to get permanent Bliss. The names and forms which are only false appearances are taken to be absolutely real, and thus the man of Pravritti or external objective vision rolls in the miserable mire of delusion and attachment. He is caught by the force of attraction, repulsion and he becomes a slave to

the passions of the world! These worldly forces blind man to deluded indulgences in sensual objects which give momentary delusive pleasure to his nervous itchings, and act as a great bar to Absolute Independence. He is compelled by forces of objectivity to deny the existence of Brahman altogether and thus fall deeper and deeper into the abyss of ignorance and suffering. Knowledge of Brahman, therefore, is the only potent medicine for the disease of ignorance.

Khanda IV Superimposition (Adhyasa)

Adhyasa or superimposition is mistaking one thing for another through delusion. The mirage in the desert is a common phenomenon experienced by many a traveller in deserts. The mirage presents not only the false presence of water but also buildings, meadows and mansions with cattle grazing in it. This kind of appearance has deceived not a few, who through ignorance of the unreality of the mirage-water, run after it, taking it for a reality and get disappointed in their pursuit. They then realise that what appeared to be a big reservoir of water and an oasis is only a dazzling of Sun's rays on the bed of hot sand, and not real water or place of recreation. In a similar manner, the ignorant and the childish do not realise that this multifarious world with countless creatures, mobile and immobile, living therein (consciously and unconsciously), innumerable objects of attraction and manifold sceneries, is only an appearance, a dazzling as it were, of the Light of Absolute Consciousness reflected through Maya or the Great Divine Illusion! Man searches after pleasure, runs after variegated objects that he perceives in this world, runs after son, gold, women, land, name, fame, learning and beauty! He fattens his ego through anger generated by extreme longing for objects of the senses, infatuated love or deluded attachment for objects of indulgence; this is because man takes this world and its contents to be real just as the traveller in the deserts takes the mirage to be real. Wise men with deep Spiritual Experience realise the utter falsity of this great universe of diverse appearances, know it as a mere appearance of the Supreme Brahman in Its Infinite Glory and do not run after the objects of the world, just as the experienced traveller who had enough experience of the mirage in the desert, fully knows later on that what appears is only the dazzling of the Sun's rays on the bed of sand, and does not once more run after the mirage thinking it is a real meadow with a tank full of good water. The names and forms which this world is made up of are only as real as the mirage in the desert; there is only Asti, Bhati, Priya or Satchidananda in reality! Ignorance of the nature of this existence leads to great misery, but a knowledge of the fact that all this world and its contents form only the Being of Brahman, the Sat-Chit-Ananda, liberates one from the bondage of birth and death, grief and delusion!

This phenomenon is also analogized by the misery and suffering caused by mistaking a rope for snake in twilight. The man treads upon a rope lying on the way at twilight and immediately jumps in fear thinking it is a poisonous snake. His heart throbs rapidly and he cries out in fear. But when a friend of his brings a light it is found to be not a snake but only a rope. Then all his fears Ivanish, he becomes once again happy. In the same manner, this entire existence, which is only Brahman in reality, is wrongly perceived to be diverse and divided.

The objects of this world are not really true by themselves, their truth lies in the fact that they are only Brahman in essence. Man suffers in this world because he mistakes the unreal manifold phenomena projected out by illusion to be real existence. The light shown by the Guru or the Spiritual Teacher helps the aspirant to know that what he perceives is not really a diverse world, but the Indivisible Brahman in Its Infinite Glory appearing! The Guru initiates the spiritual aspirant into the mystery of the Absolute

Reality, namely, the “Abheda Bodha-Vakya” of “Tat-Tvam-Asi,” “That thou art,” and thus the aspirant is enabled to meditate on the Great Truth! Then all his fears terminate, he is immersed once for all in Eternal Joy! He practises Manana and Nididhyasana and experiences the Blissful Nature of Brahman which is the One Undivided Essence of Consciousness! The world of names and forms does not exist.

Khanda V Happiness Is in Atman Only

The feeling of pleasure experienced by the senses and the ego does not lie in the objects of perception. It is a reflection of the Bliss of the Atman inside. The Jiva projects the power of objectification called the mind and perceives the diverse world outside. It searches for its prey in the external world and finding its bait, catches hold of it and for the time being, there is a cessation of objectification. As soon as this cessation takes place, there is the stoppage of the activity of the mind as it turns back to its place of origin, the Atman. Immediately the Jiva experiences the bliss of its own Self and there is Joy! There is no joy when the mind runs externally, but there is joy when it ceases functioning: when the object of desire is obtained, and also during deep sleep. These are the two instances when there is experience of joy! But this joy is very transient and is clouded by delusion. It is the bliss of illusion that is experienced through indulgence. But the Jiva foolishly thinks that the pleasure comes from the object of perception and indulgence, when actually it is the Bliss of its own Self! The dog licks the bone and when blood oozes out from its own tongue, thinks that it is from the flesh in the bone, and indulges in it still more. Similar is the case with external indulgence. The Bliss is in Brahman or Atman. “Anando Brahmeti Vyajanat̕ (Taitt. Up. III. 6), “Bliss was known to be Brahman.” “Anandam Brahmano Vidnan Na Bibheti Kutaschand’ (Taitt. Up. II. 9) “He who knows the Bliss of Brahman fears not from anything at all.” This Bliss is permanently and consciously experienced during Samadhi or the Realisation of Brahman. The Conscious Identity of the Jiva with Brahman alone destroys the longing for fleeting objects of the world. Then there is no more the world of perception. There is Infinite Experience. There is Fulness. There is Perfection. There is Joy. There is Bliss! Brahman or Atman is the Fulness of intelligence-Bliss, the very being and embodiment of it!

Khanda VI Brahman Is Both Material and Efficient Cause

Brahman is the only Reality. There is no substance out of which Brahman can create the world, because there is nothing which is not Brahman. If Brahman should create a world, he cannot but project Himself out as a differentiated entity. So Brahman becomes the material cause of the world. But the agent who shapes and works out the world is Brahman Himself. So Brahman is the Efficient cause of the world. But Brahman alone is appearing as the world and there is no separate existence called world. So Brahman becomes the fictitious cause of the world. The problem of creation is a very complicated one and the Upanishads speak of it variously. At a place the Upanishad says that the world comes out of Brahman as thread comes out from the mouth of a spider, as trees emerge out from the earth as hair grows on the human body! (Mund. Up. I. 1. 7). This would perhaps suggest that the world is a real creation of Brahman, that there is a real change in the Body of Brahman, and that at least in form the world is distinct from Brahman. But at another place the Upanishad says that there is nothing diverse here (Brih. Up. IV. 4. 19), that all this is Brahman (Mand. Up. II). Here it is clear that there is no real creation, but it is only an appearance, a Vivarta. The creation of the world by Brahman is compared to the creation, of a mirage by the Sun, which is not a real creation but only a false appearance. The Yoga-vasishtha says that the world is not a creation like a thread from the spider’s mouth or a tree from the earth, by only like a

dream created by the mind, and the mirage created by the Sun. The world is only a dazzling of Consciousness and not an actual projection out of Brahman. Projection necessitates change, but Brahman is changeless, Brahman is actionless, and Hence He cannot be the Efficient Cause also. Brahman is Indivisible and hence He cannot be the Material Cause. Brahman is only the apparent Cause or the Vivarta Karana just as the Sun is the cause of the mirage in the desert. Divine Sages like Dattatreya and undaunted knowers like Goudapada contend that there is no world at all, that there is no such thing as creation, that all is Brahman only appearing in Its own Glory! This seems to be the most perfect view of all, since it solves all problems of life and puts an end to all logic and argumentation. There is no more doubt. It is the highest Truth and the most difficult to understand for the worldly man. Such a noble declaration of the Reality can be grasped only by advanced and well-purified aspirants and not by a novice in the spiritual path.

Brahman is not affected by the appearance of the world, just as the Sun is not affected by the appearance of the mirage or the defect of the eye. The question of efficient and material causes is only in the preliminary stages of spiritual Sadhana, and in the advanced stages the curiosity to know the problem of creation vanishes, for one realises that Brahman alone is all, that there is nothing actually created. Everything is only an appearance, and not a matter for the purpose of cause and effect. The relative plane presents a great and unsolvable problem of creation, preservation and destruction of the world, of Karma, Effort, Grace, Destiny, and the like, but the wise knower does not find any meaning in such a theory at all. To him there is no such thing as creation, there is only the Glory of Brahman, the Great, the Infinite, the Eternal, the Bliss of Consciousness! Such a Knowledge is not easy to obtain, it comes through the passage of time-“Kalenatmani Vindatt (Gita, IV. 38). Everybody should strive his utmost to obtain that Great Knowledge, it is the only thing dear to all, the Goal of all faiths and all religions!

Khanda VII Brahman Is Unattached

This Nature of Brahman is already explained in the previous Khanda. Brahman is not attached to creating, preserving and destroying the world just as a man is attached to sustaining and beautifying his body. It is argued to certain philosophers that creation is due to the remnant of Jivas left even after dissolution of the world, whose Karmas have not yet fructified into experience, and that the collective force of their Karmas tends to creating a world for another time, for purpose of their objective experiences. This is true only with respect to the grosser Jivas. Brahman is not dependent on Karma. He is unattached! Karma is only a creation of the mind and carries no meaning by itself. A person who meditates on the Indivisible Brahman perceives no such thing as the law of Karma. The Law of cause and effect, Karma and bondage is only a network of delusion in the realm of Maya. If the Sun is attached to and suffers from the existence of the mirage in the desert, then, Brahman also would be affected by and attached to the existence of the world! The world is Brahman only shining. Hence, there There is nothing existent, other than Brahman, hence is no question of Brahman’s being attached to anything. There is no meaning in Brahman’s being attached. Brahman is not an egoistic entity and therefore there is not even the possibility of its being attached to an ego. Man, if not attached to the objects of the external world, may be attached to his own body; and even if he has renounced the attachment for his physical body, he very likely be attached to his ego, the Ahamkara-Tattva which keeps up his individuality in tact. The working of the ego cannot be cognised or understood easily, for it is the very

being of the individual personality. But Brahman is Existence itself and not an ego. It therefore, cannot be attached. Brahman is the Absolute. May

It is also possible to content that creation is due to the remnant of the Karmas in the remaining Jivas for after all, it is not impossible to think that Brahman is the collective homogeneous being and consciousness of innumerable appearances of egos. It is also questioned whether the Entirety of Being is not thus affected by Illusion! For, Salvation is only individual, to which particular liberated ego, the Infinite Existence is revealed as it really is, and not a wholesale Emancipation for all the countless Jivas living. For, then, creation would have an end, which is not the case, really. Creation is beginningless and endless. This is clear proof to show that coming, being and vanishing are simultaneous and all these can happen at one and the same point in space. This mystery can be grasped only by subtle and pure intellects, through the knowledge of which, there is an instantaneous cessation from activity, and there is Illimitable joy which the mind and the senses know not. Such as those who are able to comprehend the meaning of this secret of existence are really fit to practise Vedantic Meditations. Others have only to grope in darkness in spite of erudition and vast scriptural study. It is not all among philosophic students that can understand the subtle truth of existence, and progress in Wisdom-Meditations without obstruction. To realise the plenum or fullness of Existence one has to struggle very earnestly too.

The Atman in the individual body is identical with Brahman or the Supreme Soul projecting the universe at large. The identity of the individual and the cosmos and the identity of the Atman with Brahman is very well illustrated in the Yoga-vasishtha. Each individual is a cosmos to further smaller individuals living in it and each Atman is Brahman only immanent in everything. The idea of individual and the cosmos is only due to difference in the power of cognition latent in every living being. A big tree which stretches above man's head up to hundreds of feet appears to be a tiny piece of grass when looked at from a far off high mountain or hill. So what is the real nature of the tree? When you look at a mountain from hundreds of miles away you think you can easily scale across the mountains with one step above it. But it is some miles high truth. The eye is always deceptive. Similar is the mind. It deceives the individual continuously until the dawn of Knowledge. To man the world is a very large body and real existence. But to smaller organisms living in his body he is himself a very big cosmos. In this manner, the Yoga-vasishtha says there are worlds within worlds ad infinitum. Hence it is clear that the individual and cosmos are only in conception that being is really indivisible and homogeneous, and that in truth they are one and the same only bearing two names empirically. It is proved therefore as corollary that Atman is identical with Brahman and so Atman is also unattached and is existent everywhere, though mysterious phenomenon in Brahman Itself appears as many.

Khanda VIII Qualifications of an Aspirant

The necessity for the four means of Sadhana was explained in Khanda II. The aspirant should realise the ultimate unity of the paths of selfless service, devotion, Yoga and Jnana. A person who hates any method is not really wise. All paths are different of real Knowledge. When there is real understanding all paths are found to be one. The wise man does not find any meaning in the difference among names and actions. The whole world of names, forms and actions is an intimate Unity for the wise Knower. "Brahmaitadhi Sarvani Namani Roopani Karmani Bibhart' (Brih. Up. 1-6, 1-3), "Brahman alone put on various names, forms and actions."

The following sentences of the Upanishads extol Karma Yoga: “Even doing deeds here, one should desire to live a hundred years, thus it is right for thee, not otherwise than this, the deed does not adhere on man” (Isa. Up. II). “One should give (in charity) with faith, etc. (Taitt. Up. I. Ii. 2).”

Thus Bhakti is extolled in the Upanishads: “He whom the Self chooses, by him the Self can be gained” (Katha Up. II. 23). “Through the grace of the Lord one beholds the glory of the Self” (Katha Up II. 23). “With a golden vessel the Real’s face is covered over. That Thou, O Pushan, uncover for one whose law is the Real to see” (Isa Up. XV). “For the sake of Knowledge let him go to a Spiritual Teacher” (Mund. Up. 1. 2. 28). “Let him obtain Immmortality through singing... Stotra” etc. (Chh. Up. II. 22. 2).

Yoga also is extolled in the Upanishads. “The firm control of the senses they regard as Yoga” (Katha Up. VI ii). “Speak the Truth... practise Virtue... neglect not the study of the Vedas (Yama, Niyama)”, etc. (Taitt. Up. I. Ii. I). “There are a hundred and one channels of the heart, One of these passes up to the crown of the head. Going up by it, one goes to Immortality” (Chh. Up. VIII. 6. 6).

Then the highest Jnana is declared in the Upanishads: “By the Lord is all this enveloped” (Isa Up.l). “Brahrnan is this All” (Mand. Up. II., Mund. Up. II. 2. 11). “Brahman is Truth, Knowledge, Infinity” (Taitt. Up. II. I). “Whoever knows I am Brahman’ becomes this All” (Brih. Up. 14. 10). “Verily, all this is Brahman” (Chh. Up. III. 14. 1)

. “Thou art That” (Chh. Up. VI. 16. 3), etc. Hence it is clear that selfless service for the removal of impurity and purification of the heart, service of Guru, Japa, Kirtan, Upasana for removal of distraction in the mind and making it tranquil, dispassion, reflection, enquiry, etc., for purpose of attaining knowledge have to be practised. The eternal words of the Srutis are not lopsided because they speak of the Supreme Truth which is Ideal Perfection. The Upanishads are intuitional revelations and hence, do not fall short of the all-round approach that may be tried by various kinds of temperaments towards the realisation of the Ultimate Goal of life, which is an embodiment of all things here, an aggregate of all selves, the All-inclusive Brahman! The various virtues enumerated in the thirteenth chapter of the Bhagavadgita as real Wisdom have to be very carefully cultivated if one would wish to have purification of the heart and dawn of Wisdom thereby for the sake of Self-realisation.

All virtues pave the way to realisation but are not ends by themselves. One should not, therefore, attach himself too much to certain kinds of habits like the so-called Vairagya and hating of the world. Lopsided development tends to downfall and misery. Virtues like love, compassion, mercy, kindness, dispassion are all preliminary requisites and not the ultimate ends of life. A man attached to renunciation has no time to think of the sublime truths of existence and hence wastes his life in false meditation on renunciation. Attachment to unreal things leans to spiritual downfall in the long run. Just as a thorn stuck in the leg is removed by another thorn and then both the thorns are thrown out, evil qualities have to be removed by virtuous qualities like love, dispassion and renunciation, but both have to be renounced in course of time. Sri Dattatreya says in his Avadhuta Gita that at first the world should be renounced, and then the subtle desire has to be renounced and finally the idea of renunciation itself has to be renounced. “Renounce renunciation” says the Yoga-vasishtha too. Even forces like mercy, love, compassion and Vairagya are only forces of objectivity in the realm of Maya and will bind one to rebirth when not utilised with discrimination. One should not get attached to such objective forces, though apparently they seem to be superior virtuous qualities. Virtue and vice are creations of the mind and are not real entities. Goodness differs from man to man, from place to place, from time to time, and from one condition to another condition. Eternal Bliss is not a fruit of one-sided development, it is attained

through a unification of everything here through balance and equanimity, through all-inclusiveness and positive affirmation of Absoluteness. After all every quality is an objective force and has to be finally renounced. All the qualities should get fused in the realm of the Absolute and the wise man stands tranquil, without any change whatsoever. Goodness, renunciation and indifference to external modifications are only an outward sign of inward Wisdom and do not constitute wisdom by themselves. Renunciation and other virtues should be involuntary and unconscious qualities and not qualities forced upon the self against its modifications. The desire or the taste for objects should be unknown to man. Then he is said to be established in the Great! A Brahmin does not care to think about meat and wine, and it is not the effect of forced renunciation. It is the very nature of the Brahmin to pay indifference to meat and wine. Similar should be the attitude of the wise man towards the world. He has not to brush aside the world from his vision; he has simply to forget that there is any such thing as the world. This is true wisdom.

To know the real meaning of spiritual Sadhana is not possible for the majority of the aspirants. Only a few blessed persons grasp the true meaning and purpose of renunciation, virtue, penance, goodness, intelligence, etc. Marvellous is the Spiritual Path! Mysterious are its ways! Only fortunate souls can understand what real Spirituality is! Only highly advanced souls know the meaning of it.

Khanda IX Kaivalyam

Kaivalyam or Moksha is the Goal of life. It is Absolute Independence, full of Bliss without decay. In Kaivalya-Mukti or Final Emancipation there is only the glory of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, there is Absolute- ness of Being. There is not even such a thing as Power really, for Power implies separateness and objectivity which is a limitation. Perfection is attained only in Absolute Independence, which is attainable through the knowledge of the Supreme Brahman, the only Real Existence. This is attained either through 'Sadyo-Mukti' or Krama-Mukti'. Sadyo-Mukti is Immediate Salvation whereas Krama-Mukti is Progressive Salvation. Sadyo-Mukti is attained only by Jnanis but Upasakas and Bhaktas attain the same through Krama-Mukti. A Jnani realises that there is nothing here except Brahman everywhere and hence his Pranas do not depart to any place, for place does not exist for the Jnani. All is Indivisible Satchidananda and hence where is space to move? Therefore, there is no departure anywhere. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says: "He who is without desire, who is freed from desire, whose desire is satisfied, whose desire is the Self,-his Pranas (breaths) do not depart. He being Brahman Itself, becomes Brahman" (Brih. Up. IV. 4. 6). "They (Pranas) are gathered together right there the breaths do not go out from the dead man (Jnani)" (Brih. Up. III. 2. 11). This is the glorious way of Sadyo-Mukti or Immediate Emancipation. The Jnani does not perceive any object and hence becomes

Brahman instantaneously. But in the case of the Upasaka performing worships and meditations and the Bhakta performing austerities for the purpose of purification and trying to get higher worlds, the Srutis declare: "They who practise austerity and faith in the forest, the peaceful knowers who live on alms, depart passionless through the door of the Sun to where is that Immortal Person, the Imperishable Spirit" (Mund. Up. 1. 2. 11). They go to Brahmaloka and then attain Kaivalya-Mukti. The Bhakta loves an objective Being, the blissful region of his Ishta, the immortal region of his favourite God, or something which is highly superphysical. But a Jnani does not desire for any such thing, for, to him, the seat of Immortality is here and now, which is the All.

Mukti is not a thing to be attained somewhere outside. It is not far away to be obtained after much search and enquiry. It is the very being of everything and everything is That only. “Thou art That” (Chh. Up. VI. 16. 3) is the eternal Truth. All this is Brahman in the three periods of time. There is no such thing as bondage and suffering. This is the Truth. But one has to be conscious of this fact. This, empirically, is called Liberation. All are Brahman only in reality. But none knows that he is Brahman. To know that is Final Emancipation. Liberation is not getting something which is not here at hand, it is only a “Self-realisation”, i.e., knowing the Self fully as it really is. This is done through the removal of unconsciousness or Ajnana which event takes place through the passage of time in the form of personal exertion, external aid, or automatic illumination through exhaustion of past Karmas.

Khanda X Method of Meditation

There are, according to the Yoga-vasishtha, three kinds of Wisdom Meditations. The first thing is called ‘Brahma- bhavana’ or feeling that everything is Brahman, that there is no such thing as ‘other than Brahman’, that Brahman alone exists, and so, that one is the Immortal Brahman, the Infinite Existence. The second method is Padartha-bhavana-tyaga’ renunciation of the idea that things which we see are or mere material objects, i.e., affirmation of the fact that what seem to be physical worlds and bodies are really the Supreme Soul, the Brahman alone appearing and hence that one is Brahman Itself. The third is ‘Kevala-bhava’ or feeling that the subject is identical with the object, that there is no such thing as subject and object, that the individual is identical with the Supreme, and hence that one is the Absolute Independent Brahman. Here is explained the method of meditation through Brahmabhavana which is the most advanced sort of meditation, superior to all others.

“I am the all-blissful blessed Siva or Brahman. I am the source of the great Omkaranada. I am Immortal, for I am everything, this All! I cannot die for I am Timeless and Spaceless. I am Brahman, the Infinite. I am the Absolute Existence, which is of the very nature of Supreme Awareness (Consciousness), the Indivisible Mass of Bliss, the One Essence, without beginning, middle or end. I am Eternal, Pure, Perfect, Free and Unattached! I alone exist everywhere at all times. All is myself, I am the All. There is nothing except myself. I am Brahman which is Absolute Intelligence. There is only one Being which is neither individual nor cosmic, but is Absolute. There is only one Infinity of Bliss and Knowledge without objectification, consciousness without thought. I am perfect Bliss-Absolute.”

This Meditation will lead to Absolute Realisation of the Supreme Brahman. This is the quint essence of the Kevala-Advaita-Vedanta or Brahma-Vidya. This is the Absolute Truth. This is all. This is everything. Everyone should try to attain this. Peace be to all!

Thus ends the glorious Siva-Vidya or the Science of the Supreme Brahman! OM!

Chapter IV

THE WAY OF MEDITATION

Section I

Withdrawal From Multiplicity

Self-restraint is the opposite of self-expression. The latter tends towards Pravritti or life in the variegated Samsara, and the former leads to the Highest Integration through Nivritti or stepping back to Truth. The creative diversifying power is turned in and sublimated into the spiritual splendour. The withdrawal from multiplicity and centring oneself in Unity is effected through self-restraint which is the austere transformation of the creative objective force into the conscious Power that causes the blossoming of the sense of individual finitude into the expanse of objectless consciousness. Variety is the meaning of manifestation. Every individual force is a copy of the limitless creative force and the natural tendency of this energy is to move towards the creation of multiplicity. This is the reason why the control of the action of creativity is found to be difficult in the case of those who are tied to individual physicality. An individual finds it hard to properly direct the cosmic habit unless he takes recourse to process of Spiritual Realisation. A spiritual Sadhaka goes to the source of this objectified energy and compel the force to diffuse itself in the serene Ground-Noumenon. A person who has let loose the flow of the creative force gets entangled in the process of multiple-creation and ever remains away from the knowledge of the Non-Dual Truth of his Eternal Self. This is the root-background of the universal ethics that self-control is imperative to a seeker

After the Absolute Reality. Those who have discriminatively grasped the spiritual character of human life refrain from the instinctive practice of self-multiplication and devote themselves to the glorious task of directing the potential energy to conscious contemplation on the Spiritual Ideal through the triple transformation of the active emotional and intellectual aspects of the general human nature. Such integrated persons possess a mighty power of understanding, analysis and meditation. The Chhandogya Upanishad says that when purity and Sattva are increased, there is a generation of immense memory which paves the way to the shattering open of the knot of self. The most intricate technic of the art of Self-realisation is mastered by the genius of an austere who has learnt to expand his formative lower into the plenitude of limitless life. Such austere spiritual beings flow with the lustrous spiritual strength which handles with ease even the most formidable of the diversifying forces of nature. Fear is unknown to them and their divinised energy is centred in the Self to be utilised in transcending the realm of the ego-sense. They establish themselves in the unbroken vow of leaping over phenomenon into the heart of Existence. Such is the glory of self-restraint!

The control of the objective instincts is the preparation for world-renunciation in the quest of the Ultimate Essence. An abandonment of earthly nature effected by a distaste for particularities is what marks the character of a true austere Sadhaka. He should not enter the household, for, his path leads to Unity and not to the creative social activity. Alone and unfriended should he carry on the duty of Self-integration through unceasing selflessness and remembrance of the Divine Ideal. Selfless service polishes the self and rubs the ego and thus renders the person fit for the higher life of Dhyana and

Brahma-Chintana. A cutting off from acquaintance with relatives is necessary, for, Nivritti-Marga does not allow of any transient connections.

Fitness for Wisdom

One who is fit for receiving Wisdom of the Self shall receive it in due time.' Self-effort and passage of time work simultaneously and one cannot be distinguished from the other, for Providence and Personal exertion cannot be separated as they both work simultaneously and are interdependent. Rather, these are only two names for one and the same force of action.

Sri Sankaracharya had already exhorted that one has to undergo the disciplinary stages of Viveka, Vairagya, Sama, Dama, Uparati, Titiksha, Sraddha, Samadhana, and Mumukshutva before getting initiated into the mystery of Existence. One should not be initiated into the Truth of the Absolute unless he is found well developed in all these qualities. Nowadays generally we find that aspirants do not have a strong desire for Liberation. They may have a ray of Viveka and Vairagya of a mild variety. But it is very difficult to find an aspirant who cares for nothing but final Emancipation, who treats the whole world and its contents as mere straw, who meditates incessantly upon how to attain Salvation from embodied existence. It is not easy to understand the meaning of Liberation. How can it be possible for raw men of the world to realise the nullity of earthly existence and of worldly activities? Even advanced aspirants sometimes have got a strong desire for doing something wonderful in this world, something which none has done before. Such people cannot have a real desire for liberation. And such people are unfit for receiving Brahma Vidya. It is only the Uttama-Adhikari, the best qualified, who cares for nothing, who is totally indifferent to the ways of the world, who is ever silent and serene due to the dawn of proper knowledge, who is ever the same among the diverse men of the world, who is undisturbed by the distracted activity of the world, who is calm and peaceful, who has withdrawn himself from the bustle of life, who cares not for either death or life, who is unmindful of what is happening in the world, who is careless towards either this or that, that is really fit to receive the Ultimate wisdom of the Absolute! Even if there is the slightest desire lurking inside other than for the Realisation of the Absolute, that man will not be able to comprehend the true import of the Vedantic instructions by the Spiritual Teacher (Preceptor). He will have thousand doubts and distractions in the mind which will entirely pull him down from Vedantic Meditation. A person should desire for nothing else, than the Realisation of Brahman. There should be no other thought throughout the day than of the way of attaining Self-realisation. Every thought, every speech, every action, nay, every breath of the person should illustrate the method of realising the Absolute. Such a person is fit to receive Vedantic Wisdom.

Guide to Meditation

Meditation is the centering of the force of thought on the highest conception of the ideal to be attained. Hence meditation starts with a belief in the reality of a dual existence, for, without such a faith in duality, meditation lapses into a state of the faculty of thinking and contemplation becomes impossible. Meditation starts with duality and ends in the Glorious Consciousness of the Unity of Life.

A belief in the degrees of truth and reality in being is necessitated by the fact that the whole universe is a gradual materialisation of the Highest Brahman Itself. A completely transcendent being unconnected with the meditator is impossible to be reached. Truth is immanent too. The object of meditation is very closely connected with the meditator and exists as his very essence and hence the possibility of the

realisation of the Infinite. The world is to be made use of as a step in the ladder of ascent to the Glory of Transcendental Spiritual Perfection.

The aspirant is, thus, led to the obvious fact that the existing forces of nature are to be made friends with and utilised as helps in spiritual Meditation. One cannot easily deny the differences existing among the hard earth, the liquid water, the hot fire, the blowing wind and the empty space, so long as one is conscious of his relational individuality. The challenges of weather, the degrees of intelligence in men, the respective demands of the various sheaths of embodied consciousness, exertion, feeling, will, the passions, the joys, the sorrows and ills of life point to the difference that exists in the process of Truth-Manifestation. The Brahman does not manifest itself equally in all things. It manifests greatly in Divine Beings, in Incarnations and in Sages, less in ordinary human beings, lesser still in inanimate beings. A complete knowledge of the scheme and the methods of the working of Nature will accelerate the process of the Realisation of the Brahman-Consciousness through intensified Meditation.

Tops of mountains, sombre cloudy weather and places near vast expanses or water generate and attract atmospheric electricity and, hence, are best suited for Meditation as they add to the energy produced during powerful Meditation. Vast expanse of space also helps Meditation. Cramped places obstruct the consciousness of expanded existence and are not helpful to conscious expansion.

The Uttarakhanda is the region where sages and divinities lived and meditated and is, therefore, the best place suited for Meditation. The sacred Ganga and the Himalayas diffuse the most exalted spiritual currents helpful for Spiritual Meditation. The land above Haridwara (the Gateway to the Land of Hari) extending upto the high Himalayan Peaks is the most blessed land meant for Meditation. Sages Meditated in this region and have left undying spiritual vibrations.

Facing the North or the East is best suited for Meditation. There is a powerful magnetic force in Northern direction. All blessedness is in the Northern direction.

From 12 Midnight to 4 a.m., the time is best suited for Meditation. There is absolute calmness, coolness, peace and an integrating vibration at that time.

Darkness makes existence appear as a One Whole Being, whereas light compels one to perceive the multiplicity of the world. Sunlight, or very bright artificial lights like patromax light (gas light) etc., are not good for Meditation, for they distract the mind very much. Dark places are most useful for Meditation. Moonlight also is useful for Meditation.

During Meditation powerful electric current is produced in the body. If, while meditating, the hands and legs are stretched out, the current generated is lost into the air through the tips of fingers and toes. One should lock the fingers or be touching the knees and sit in Padma, Siddha, Sukha or Svastika Asana, so that the current may be circulating in the body itself.

The earth has got the power of absorbing and draining away electric energy. Hence, during Meditation, one should sit on tiger skin or deerskin to avoid this mishap and to generate more energy.

No concentration is possible when the spinal column is bent because, thereby the flow of the current of Prana is obstructed. Hence one should sit erect for Meditation.

One should have either enlightened intelligence or tenacious faith. If both of these are lacking in a person, he cannot gain concentration on the Reality.

Except in very rare cases, no Meditation on the Reality is possible without first deriving help from the direct company of an advanced spiritual personage. The exact technic of attuning the self with the Infinite cannot be known except through the company of an experienced saint or sage. Study of books may stimulate activity but the strength to fight with evil comes only through association with men of wisdom.

The most dreadful enemies of Meditation are Lust and Anger. These two shall destroy at one fit even very vast energy accumulated through long practice. Hence one should be extremely circumspect about these two negative forces.

When the eyes and the ears are shut, the whole world is shut out from one's experience. Sound and Colour constitute the whole universe. When they are not, nothing is.

Indifference to external happenings is the greatest treasure of the Meditator. He should not worry whether the world goes on happily or is otherwise.

The Meditator should consider his individual personality as a mere insignificant nothing. He should be ever contemplating on the Infinite Fullness.

Desire for nothing but the Infinite alone. This is the greatest of all instructions.

Section II

Unity

"Ekam Sad Viprah Bahudha Vadanti'. Truth is One: Sages call it variously. As this Truth is Anirvachaniya, as it is beyond the reach of the senses and mind, it is capable of direct realisation through Aparoksha-anubhuti only. When this transcendental experience is attempted to be described in words: when the Infinite is attempted to be brought within the comprehension of the finite mind or intellect; when the Indescribable is attempted to be described in words, only a ray or rather a shadow of the Real is conveyed. Various have been the methods of approach of the Seers, and, therefore, though the perception of Reality has been the same in all cases. The nearest approach to Reality (which alone they have been able to) encompassed in words has been different.

Yet, the Vedic Seers have, one and all declared in the most unambiguous terms the Universality of Truth. "Sarvam Hyetat Brahma-All this (Mandukya Upanishad). "Sarvam is Brahma-All this is indeed Brahman" (Chhandogya Brahman' Khalu Upanishad). Throughout the Upanishads the one Idam distinct note that rings is that of unity. The entire Universe from Brahma down to a blade of grass, as also the apparently lifeless immobile inanimate objects is pervaded, guided and supported by Consciousness; Consciousness is their basis; this Consciousness is Brahman (Aitareyopanishad).

Sage Uddalaka, while instructing his son Svetaketu on That 'knowing which all else becomes known', also points out the same Truth: "That which is the subtle essence of everything, That is the Reality, the Atman; Thou art That" (Chhandogya Upanishad). The Mandukya Upanishad rejoins: "Ayam Atma Brahma-This Atman is Brahman".

Using a different terminology, the first Mantra of Isavasya Upanishad, asserts “Isavasyam Idam Sarvam All this is enveloped by the Lord”. Again, “Eko Devah Sarvabhuteshu Gudhah; Sarvavyapi Sarva Bhutantaratma-God is One; He is hidden in all beings. He pervades all. He is the Inner Atman of all beings” (Svetasvatara Upanishad).

Wherever we turn in the Sacred Books of India, we are confronted with this one Truth. “All this is strung in Me as the thread-beads on a thread and the same thread tied into knots acting as the beads, and the same thread holding the knots together, and appearing at first sight to be different from the beads (Gita VII. 7)”, says Lord Krishna to Arjuna in the course of His Immortal Song. Again, after describing His Divine Vibhutis, the Lord sums up the idea in a few words: “But, of what avail is a knowledge of all these details to thee? I support (pervade as essence) the whole Universe with one part of My Real Being” (X. 42). “That which is the seed (inner essence) of all beings is Myself” (X. 39). When Arjuna has the beatific Vision of the Lord, he, too, describes Him as pervading everything (XI. 20). The Lord characterises a Yogayukta beings (VI. 29). “I do not perish (cease to exist) for one as one who sees all beings in the Self, and the Self in all who sees Me everywhere, and sees everything in Me; nor does he perish for Me” (VI. 30). Similar is a Mahatma who sees everything as Vasudeva (VII. 19).

Truth is One. Unity is life. Diversity or the perception of many diversified beings here is falsehood. It leads to disharmony, dissension and ruin.

Own If this Unity or Truth is the reality of our being, why then do we not realise It? It is, says the Lord in the Gita, on account of the Supreme One being veiled by His Yogamaya (VII. 25). The deluded, whose wisdom has been taken away by this Maya, who have thus embraced the demoniac nature of ignorance, do not, therefore, adore Him (VII. 15). This Maya is characterised by Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, which are the forces that sustain the world. Like Brahman Maya, too, is Anirvachaniya-indescribable. Suffice it to say that She (Maya) has Avarana Sakti (veiling power) which prevents a perception of Truth and Vikshepa Sakti (projecting power) which is the cause of this universe, and the individual ego. It is this little ego, the T’ which identifies the Jiva with the five Kosas: identifying his Self with the body, man thinks that he is distinct personality, and gets attached to his son, wife, wealth, property, etc.; identifying with the Pranamaya Kosa, he thinks “I am hungry”, etc.; identifying with the Manomaya Kosa he regards himself as a thinker and thinks “I am angry”. Etc.; identifying with the Vijnanamaya Kosa, he thinks “I am happy”. These distinctions are foreign to the Atman which is All-pervading Pure Sat-Chid-Ananda. The Jiva is deluded into the perception of the multiple on account of this separatist tendency of the ego which builds its own prison-house and distinguishes itself from its own reflections in other species of creation, which divide, particularise and multiply the One into the the cause of all the misery, bondage and endless many. Suffering. One who transcends this Maya enjoys the Bliss This is of the realisation of the Sat-Chid-Ananda Atman, that Bhuma which is the only Upanishad). Happiness (Chhandogya

How is this state to be attained? By crossing over this Maya through resorting to Him (Gita, VII-14). Constant meditation on the one Reality destroys ignorance; with the destruction of ignorance, the individualistic ego vanishes and a direct perception or realisation of the One is obtained. That is the end, aim and goal of every human being; towards that goal is the entire universe (all the objects both animate and inanimate) moving. Eventually this multiplicity will evolve again into that Unity. “Kalena Atmani Vindatl (Gita). All that we can do, and ought to do is to hasten that evolution in our individual

cases by Yogabhyasa, by constant meditation on that Unity, by realising that Unity and putting that Unity into our everyday life.

Subtle and Most Subtle

Water is more subtle than earth. Earth is only a modification of water. Earth is born of water. Earth gets dissolved in water during Pralaya or dissolution. As water is more subtle than earth, it pervades the earth. If you pour a tumbler of water on the earth it is absorbed by the earth at once.

Fire is more subtle than water. Water is born of fire. When the weather is hot, you get perspiration. Water gets dissolved in the fire during Pralaya. Put some water in a copper vessel over the fire. It becomes very hot in a short time. It boils. If you put your finger in the boiling water, it is burnt. It is not the nature of water to burn your finger. But the fire pervaded the water on account of its subtlety and rendered it hot. It pervaded the earth also. The copper vessel is only a modification of earth. It rendered the vessel also hot.

Air is more subtle than fire. Fire is born of air. Fire gets dissolved in air during Pralaya. Whenever there is movement or motion of air, there is heat. When you start the fire you fan it. The subtle air pervades the fire and causes a big conflagration.

More subtle than air is Akasa (ether). The other four elements are rooted in Akasa. Akasa pervades air, fire, water and earth.

More subtle than Akasa are Time and Mind. More subtle than mind is Parama Atman or the Supreme Soul.

“Greater (subtler) than the senses is the mind; greater or subtler than the mind is intellect; but what is greater subtler than the intellect is He or the Supreme.”

This Atman or Brahman is the source for all elements, mind, etc. It is Ati Sukshma (most subtle). It is all-pervading, interpenetrating and indwelling. The

Without and within all beings, immovable and also movable; by reason of His subtlety imperceptible: at hand and far away is That.

This Atman is hidden in all beings, but does not shine forth; but the subtle seers of Truth realise the Atman through their subtle and sharp pointed pure intellect.

Atanu Sukshma Prachodayat-May that bodiless, subtle enlighten.

Remove the Colouring of the Mind

In days of yore there were very able dyers in Marwar or Rajaputana. They would give seven colours to the saree or clothes of ladies. After washing the cloth one colour will fade away. Another colour will shine. After some washing a third colour will manifest in the cloth; then a fourth colour and so on. Even so the mind is coloured when it associates with the different objects of the world. When the mind is Sattvic, it has white colour; when it is Rajasic, it is tinged with red colour; when it is Tamasic, it has a black colour.

The mind plays with the five senses of perception and gets experiences in the waking state. The Impressions are lodged in the causal body or Karana Sarira. Ajnana or causal body is like a black sheet of cloth. In it are contained the Samskaras of all your previous births.

The mind is ever rotating like a wheel. It receives the different sense impressions through the avenues of the senses.

In the dream state the doors or windows of the senses are shut. The mind remains alone and plays. It is the subject and it is the object. It projects various sorts of objects, like mountains, rivers, gardens, chariots, cars, etc., from its own body from the material collected during the waking state. It manufactures curious mixtures and marvellous combinations. Sometimes the experiences of the previous births which are lodged in the causal body flash out during the dreaming state.

Remove the colouring of the mind through meditation on Atman. Do not allow the mind to run into the sensual grooves. Fortify yourself by developing the Vijnanamaya Kosa or intellect through Vichara or enquiry of Brahman, reflection and contemplation. The Vijnanamaya Kosa will serve the purpose of a strong fortress. It will not allow the sense impressions to be lodged in the causal body. It will not allow the impressions of the causal body to come out. It will serve a double purpose.

You will be free from dreams through meditation on the Supreme Being or Brahman when the colouring of the mind has been removed.

Brahma Jnanis or Sages have no dreams.

May you all attain the Turiya or the fourth state of eternal bliss which transcends the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep!

Samgraha Vedanta Prakaranam

(Sri Sadasivendra Sarasvati Avadhuta)

I bow down to the Divine Guru, Ramakrishna Yogindra, who is of the nature of Satchidananda, all-intelligence and an eyewitness to all the attributes or Vrittis of the mind.

I salute him who is the essence of Vedanta, and is himself of the nature of Brahman and who has drunk the nectar of the Brahma Sutra.

I prostrate to him again who is one with Brahman and whose whole body is merged in the ocean of Eternal Bliss.

A Satguru who was great and righteous, addressed a disciple who was yearning for the knowledge of the Self, on the subject of Tattva Jnana.

In this universe which is of the nature of Brahmanda there are seven veils (Avarana). Therein is the city of nine gates and in the indestructible sky thereof, there are the two beings, the Supreme and the indestructible. One is the Uttama Purusha and the other is the Akshara Purusha. Of these two the Supreme Being is of the nature of Eternal, pure, all-wise, free, Eternal Bliss. He is all-full and non-dual, and of the nature of a Matra. The indestructible or Akshara Purusha being deluded by his own Svarupa and because of the veil of Vikshepa (tossing of the mind) is always accompanied by Maya. Giving birth to three sons, Pramatra, Pramana and Prameya, and with Ahamkara (the idea of 'T'-ness) as minister, and

with all the twenty-four Tattvas as the members of the family, he is enthroned in the nine-gated city and during all the three states of Jagrat, Svapna and Sushupti, reigning supreme in the right eye, the throat and the heart respectively, enjoys the inner subtle world through its 14 sense-organs (5 Jnana Indriyas, 5 Karma Indriyas, Manas, Chitta, Buddhi and Ahamkara). The three obstacles in the form of Vitteshana, Dareshana and Putreshana and the six enemies, lust, anger, greed, etc., give rise to the idea of mineness and thineness in wealth, women and son and with Vikshepa as the better half take away the wealth of Sadhana Chatushtaya. He is then a prey to all attachments of I am the doer, I am the enjoyer and becomes poor and empty and being burnt by the three fires of Adhibhuta, Adhidaiva and Adhyatma and being led astray by the wind of hopefulness and being enveloped by the snow of attachment to the body, being attacked by the fevers of Panchakosas (5 sheaths) and being fallen in the state of deep sleep of sensual enjoyments and being deluded by the idea of this is to be given up and this is to be taken up', with such confusion in the mind, having thought of the past virtuous deeds, and by doing acts of righteousness he thanks of attaining the goal.

Now, therefore, I give you some hints to get rid of these afflictions. Hearken attentively. Having finished the necessary Anushthana of Mantra Japa and by taking recourse to disinterested and selfless work and by giving up the idea of doership and by consecrating all your works to the Lord and taking recourse to Bhakti, if you take shelter at the lotus-feet of Satguru Ramakrishna Yogindra, in the form of Dakshinamurti, the great and the kind, who is of the nature of Supreme Soul, ever in the pose of Nirvikalpa Samadhi, under the banian tree of Nididhyasana, in the Siddhasana of Sravana and Manana, at the bank of the great river-the grace of the Lord, and having given him all the twelve prostrations, you should approach him thus: "O Sir, in pity lost by doubtings tossed, thoughts distracted, turned to these, the guide I reverence most that I may counsel learn. Therefore, protect me, protect me," in a very humble manner.

Then the All-knowing Satguru Swami asks, "Who are you? What has brought you here? What are you here for?" Then the Akshara Purusha (the Jiva), having approached him, prays: "God sir, take away all my pains of poverty and crown me with the Kingdom of the Self (Atmasamrajya) and make me free."

Then having looked at the Akshara Purusha (the Jiva) the Guru says: "O dear child, you have forgotten your real Svarupa. Thou art of the nature of eternal pure, wise, free, Uttama Purusha. But because you are unaware of your own Svarupa and your own name 'Akshara Purusha' this poverty and pain exist. These are imaginary and not real.

If it is not so, where do they come from? Why they do appear at all?

This poverty or pain comes to you just like the idea of the snake in the rope which is nothing but delusion only. Thou art That, not this. There is no doubt about it and as such you are in delusion only. It is false, not real. Now I will give you the secret of the Mahavakya which is the easiest and the quickest way for Self-realisation.

Having taken bath in the Ganga of devotion to the lotus-feet of the Satguru, having freed from all sins, having curbed down the root of all Karmas, and being associated with the virtue of the highest order, and having taken your shelter into a solitary place, with one-pointed devotion, and having your seat on Nissankalpa and with the idea of the unreality of the world as Pranayama, with Sama and Dama as Tattva Vichara, with one-pointedness of mind as your brave companion, with the armour of Brahmanusandhana, with close intimacy of Karuna, Mudita, Upeksha as your strength, having fixed the

arrow of Manonasa on the bow of Vasana Kshaya, having entered the forest of Pratibandha-traya (the three obstacles), having destroyed the thieves Kama, Krodha, etc., having got rid of the poverty of 'doership', with the virtues of humility, etc., as the family members, with Satsanga as minister, with Vairagya as shield, with knowledge of Self (Jnana) as helmet, with Uparati as the necklace, with Jivanmukti as better half, having ascended the throne of Nirvikalpa Samadhi, being satisfied with the nectar drink of Brahmananda (eternal Bliss), and being crowned with the knowledge of the Self, know that thou art the Uttama Purusha of the nature of the eternal, the pure, the wise and the free. There is nothing else besides you. Thou art That. Having got the grace of Paramaguru, the great and the wise and the Akshara Purusha (the Jiva) having received this Brahmopadesa, this great lesson, having renounced all the objects of the world, having obeyed the order of the Guru, and having put them into practice, by the grace of the Guru ascends the throne of Atmasamrajya and eventually becomes the Uttama Purusha."

Tat Tvam Asi

The central truth of the Upanishads, the essence of the Vedanta, the goal of all wisdom and all spiritual practices, the reality of all realities, the quintessence of truth is that the individual self, the embodied soul, the Jiva, is identical with the Supreme, the Absolute, the Brahman, and this is what is meant by the great utterance of Self-revelation of the Upanishads: Tat Tvam Asi-That thou art. The nature of the inner essence of yourself and the nature of Brahman is one and the same, free from all change, impersonal and all-pervasive, infinite consciousness. You are not separate from Brahman: you are no other than the Brahman Itself and It alone you are, the Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, and this indeed, is the final truth which the sages of Realisation declare through their lives and this is the culmination of all spiritual experiences of the soul... Tat Tvam Asi-That thou art.

Tat Tvam Asi is the Abheda-Bodha-Vakya of the Upanishad which is also the Upadesa-Vakya instructed by the Brahma-Srotri Brahma-Nishtha Guru to the Adhikari or the disciple. The non-separateness of Jiva and Brahman is brought out by this great aphoristic precept which Sage Uddalaka repeated nine times to his son and disciple Svetaketu.

Thou art That' is the meaning carried out by this declaration of the Sruti. It has got a superficial verbal meaning or Vachyartha and an essential indicative meaning or Lakshyartha.

The individual and the cosmic, Avidya and Maya, Jiva and Isvara, Atman and Brahman are the aspects which correspond themselves to the meaning of the terms Tat' and Tvam', That' and Thou'. That identity of the two is brought out by the following illustration.

A person Devadatta is seen by me in January at Delhi. I recognise him and say This is Devadatta'. I go to Agra on another occasion and find the same Devadatta there in April and explain, This is that Devadatta', 'Soyam Devadattah, referring to the identity of the person seen at two places at two different times. The superimpositions which appear in the 'January-Delhi- Devadatta' and the 'April-Agra-Devadatta' are ignored and only the real 'Devadatta' is taken into account. The references to Time and Space... January, April, Delhi, Agra... are only temporary and relative, for the Devadatta who was in Delhi during the month of January cannot be different from the Devadatta who came to Agra during the month of April, because the person is the same, though the place and the time are different. Thus the identity of the two Devadattas is determined.

The individual and the cosmic persons respectively limited by Avidya and Maya, namely, the Jiva and the Isvara are two personalities differentiated by space and time. When the verbal meaning or the Vachyartha of the Mahavakya is taken, the Jiva is asserted to be Isvara himself in the Pindanda. The Visva, Taijasa and Prajna of the microcosm or Pindanda correspond closely to the Virat, Hiranyagarbha and Isvara of the macrocosm or the Brahmanda. Thus the Jiva is an exact copy of or is identical with Isvara.

But the Lakshyartha or the indicative meaning of the sentence is brought out by the illustration in the story by 'Soyam Devadattah or This is that Devadatta The limitations are cast off and the essence only is taken. Atman limited by Avidya is Jiva; Brahman limited by Maya is Isvara. When the Avidya of Jiva is cast off and the Maya of Isvara is ignored, what remains is Atman instead of Jiva and Brahman instead of Isvara. Just as the Devadatta of Delhi was the same as the Devadatta of Agra, the Reality of Isvara and the Reality of the Jiva are one and the same. Hence Atman is identical with Brahman. Thou' stands for the Atman and That' for Brahman, and the word 'art' or 'Asi' signifies the identity of the two as the one Akhanda-Ekarasa-Satchidananda- Ghana.

Equal Vision

The state of equal vision is much misunderstood. Equal vision is with reference to the one common in all beings. Giving apples or grapes to the pigs is not equal vision. They will not like them. They will like only their own delicious food. A Jivanmukta who has equal vision will not embrace all women who pass on the road saying ' I have equal vision in man and woman'. He will not walk on his head saying, I have equal vision in legs and head'. He will not eat faecal matter saying, I have equal vision in rice and faecal matter'. He will not eat through the anus saying, I have equal vision in anus and the mouth'.

Body is mistaken for Atman and licentiousness is practised in the name of Vedantic equal vision by people of small understanding.

The Sruti declares, "He who sees all beings in the Self (Atman) and the Self in all beings, shrink not from anything thereafter. He who sees the One Atman or the Supreme Self in all beings, how can there be delusion or grief for him, how can he be afraid of anything?" (Isavasya Upanishad 7, 6, 7). "The Self harmonised by Yoga sees the Atman in all beings, and all beings in the Self; everywhere he sees the same" (Gita VI-29). "Sages behold the one Atman in a Brahmana adorned with learning and humility, a cow, an elephant and even a dog and an outcaste and thus have equal vision" (Gita-V-18).

Behold the one Atman in all beings. This is equal vision.

You can have Bhavana-Advaita. You cannot have Kriya-Advaita. If there are three litres of milk and if there are twenty inmates in an Ashram, the three litres should be given to the six sick persons only.

Glory of Pranava

Within the Twinkling of an Eye!

Within the twinkling of an eye, you can enter the Realms of Inexpressible Bliss-Niratisaya Ananda! The key is in your own hands: that is OM, the most sacred Pranava.

OM is the Name of the Nameless: the Form of Pranava is the Form of the Formless. OM is the symbol of Nada Brahman. OM leads the Sadhaka instantly into Samadhi.

In the Upanishads you find this Sacred Pranava compared to a bow with the help of which the Atman (arrow) is directed to the Lakshya (target), i.e., Brahman, When the Yogi who has full control over his senses and who has practised the initial rules of self-discipline, viz., Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara and Dharana, directs this arrow of Atman with the help of the Pranava-Dhanus, the arrow at once becomes one with the target! He loses himself in Nirvikalpa Samadhi and finds his Goal-Kaivalya Moksha.

All Tapas, all Sadhanas, all observances, the practice of devotion, the performance of austerities, the vow of celibacy, of truth and of Ahimsa-all these have this one end and aim: Self-realisation. From time Immemorial the Sages of India have resorted to this Great Weapon-Pranava-for the purpose of achieving this aim. Various Upanishadic Seers have sung the glory of the Pranava.

Pranava leads the aspirant through all the stages, and that is the extraordinary charm in its meditation-all at once! Ordinarily, man's Antahkarana is filled with Vishayakara Vrittis. He runs after objective enjoyment. He is dissatisfied; he is puzzled; he is unable to quench his thirst for enjoyment. He is unaware that the very source of Bliss is within him, his own Self. Pranava guides him along the right path. OM! It reveals to him the source of the Joy, Bliss, Peace and Immortality. Through the three Avasthas represented by A, U and M, he is led beyond to Turiya: and there in that Silence, he finds his own Self-the Antara Atman! That is the Goal!

Chapter V

THE GREAT REALITY AND ITS NATURE

The Struggle for the Infinite

The empirical examination of experience shows that the individual is compelled to develop a relation with objective existence. This is clear proof of the insufficiency and the finitude and, consequently, the transient character of the individual. But the urge for perfection points to the existence of a supremely unlimited Being beyond which there can be nothing. The analysis of the Self discloses the existence of the conscious Self as distinct from unconscious matter and mind. But the eternal nature of the Self requires it to be secondless and, hence, the existence of unconscious matter becomes unwarranted. The practical moral urge and the purified reason are corroborated by intuition which proclaims the existence of an indivisible, secondless, conscious Being. This supreme conception of the Reality necessitates life to be lived according to strict righteousness and moral discipline. The better the conception of the Truth, the more quickly is it realised.

The First Observation

Human consciousness at once presupposes the authenticity of the existence of the personal being which is the root of this consciousness. The very meaning of human consciousness is objectivity which sets in opposition a subject or the self against the non-subject or the not-self. Individuality of the subject and the object is the necessary condition of all forms of perception or knowledge in the world. Individual consciousness and individual existence are inseparable. The very first factor that the individual is faced within experience is the awareness of the existence of something which it cannot consider as the self. This is the starting point of active thinking and action.

The individual is confronted with the urgent need of developing a relationship with the vast universe which stares at it as the not-self. This need marks the nature of the struggle of life as a whole,-its purpose, method and goal. The need for external relation, however, is the outcome of a practical want in oneself, a want of thoroughness and genuineness in one's own being. This is the hypothesis upon which is constructed the edifice of philosophical speculation. Self-consciousness refuses to rest blind and idle. It stimulates mental and physical activity, a postulate which demands no reason. The value of life is determined by the characteristics of the effects of this activity. The sense of value is based on the extent, the depth and, consequently, the longevity of the experience of conscious satisfaction in the self. The worth and the righteous nature of all activity is, therefore, dependent on how far it nears the most supreme form of happiness which is the standard set by the results of the computation of perfection as determined by the irresistible urge for completeness of one's existence. The nature of this happiness, however, remains to be found out.

The acts of life show that the individual consciously and voluntarily acts because of the joys which are experienced by the self as a consequence of those acts. An action is a transformation from one condition to another, which, naturally, is the effect of the inability to rest eternally, in a particular condition. It is observed that all actions, mental as well as physical, have a special characteristic of being

directed towards some or the other of the forms in which the not-self appears. The impossibility to withhold conscious action leads us to the conclusion that there must be an intimate and permanent connection between the subjective conscious being and the vast objective existence. The fact that the vaster this objective existence included in the self's relations and the nearer it is to the self the greater is the intensity of happiness experienced by the self points the way to the true nature of the ultimate Reality. Logically the highest bliss must be the result of a self-merging of the unlimited existence in Self-consciousness. This the dissolution of the not-self in the means Consciousness of the Self, the disappearance of the hallucination of objectivity in Self-identical, objectless, absolute, Awareness merely, which exists not only including but transcending the entire realm of objective existence in quality as well as quantity.

Analysis of the Self

On carefully scrutinising the waking, the dreaming and the deep sleep states, it is observed that the Self is different from the physical body, the psychological organs and ignorance which are respectively manifested in externality, internality and nihility of consciousness. Further, consciousness must necessarily be an essential constituent of the Self, for without consciousness existence itself is valueless. This at first leads us to conclude that the Self must be a conscious witness of the physical, the psychological and the ignorant conditions. But being a witness means existing as an unconcerned observer of certain phenomena which exist apart from oneself. This compels us to make the Self an individual perceiver with its rival, the percept.

Metaphysically, individuality is the opposite of eternity, for, eternity means changeless self-existence which is synonymous with completeness and infinitude. Nothing that is dependent is eternal and nothing that is finite or individualised is independent. The subject cannot hope to exist eternally and at the same time be a relative of some external existence. To be eternal, the subject must be absolute, which is the fusion of the totality of existence in the subject or the Self. In order that it should be Real, the subject must at the same time become all objects, the entire existence, in which case the subjectness of the subject is sacrificed to or rather swallowed by a larger infinity of being where the subject

And the object are not separated even in the least. Hence, if the Self is eternal it cannot be something existing apart from the three empirical bodies which are objects of the witness-Self. And, the Self must be eternal, for, at no time is it possible to deny the existence of the conscious Self.

Now we are led to a twofold quandary. The Self cannot be called a differentiated witness of the three bodies, for objective consciousness and individuality vitiate self-existence and eternity. At the same time, the three bodies cannot be included in the Self itself, because they disclose their character of being devoid of consciousness and also being absent at some period of time. Reality is that which exists without break in time and space. This test rejects the three objective conditions of waking, dreaming and deep sleep from inclusion in the Self.

This philosophical difficulty has resulted in the different realistic doctrines which posit the existence of a cosmic eternal Prakriti, Sakti a or Consciousness, a world of material creation, a body of Power of God, a Maya! But the problem ever remains unsolved. A Purusha or an Isvara who is different from Prakriti, a Paramatman who is the possessor of an objectified Sakti, a Creator who projects out an external world,

a God who transforms himself into a universe, a Brahman who gives rise to a real Maya of objective unconscious existence, are all simply the magnified conceptions of the same Self which is cut off as a separated being from the three bodies and states. All these theories unconsciously make their conscious reality distinguishing it from some external existence. Either a transient philosophy has to admit its failure in its attempt to determine the nature of Truth or close its eyes to the stern appearance of the unconscious body and the world and boldly assert the sole existence of an infinite being by objectless Consciousness. The word 'Maya' does not suggest the existence of some eternal material being, but only indicates the inexplicability of the relation of Reality to appearance.

Application to Life.

Reality as understood by the practical reason, however, seems to be a greater solace in man's life than the bewildering conclusions of pure speculation. Strictly speaking, appearance and Reality cannot be said to be either identical or different. If identical, transitory phenomena and unconscious states have to be included in Reality. If different, Reality gets limited and individualised, somehow; life cannot be lived with notions which fail to be reliable guides in the onward march to perfection. The intellect which is the seat of logical conclusions has got its defects, since it functions on the wrong basis of the assumption that the results achieved by the process of the distinction of the knower, the knowledge and the known are supremely trustworthy. There is no logic without this difference; with difference there is no eternal truth. The complete synthesis of knowledge would be a union where reason is abolished altogether, where the intellect is transcended and differences are cancelled. This is not possible as long as the seeker rests in the human consciousness. But the practical moral urge points to the existence of perfection which is unlimited in every way.

This urge is corroborated by direct intuitive experience. It is heard from such sources that the supreme Reality is free from the functions of thinking, the notion of individuality and the perception of external existence. It is all unlimited, non-dual, pure spaceless, timeless, Consciousness. It is called Super-Consciousness, for it is greater than the ordinary consciousness experienced in life. This does not contradict the pure reason and since reason has nothing better to say, it has to accept the trustworthy character of what is heard from those who have reached the kernel of existence. Logic may scrutinise, reason may verify the validity of these declarations. And since they are found to be agreeable to logic and reason and as they also ratify the practical moral urge, they have to be taken as the torch in the quest after the Truth.

The rightly guided reason and revelation both require in life a special discipline based on the conception of True Being. This is also the sanction of the moral sense which persists to manifest itself in spite of repeated oppositions from the animal nature. True Being is that which knows no bounds, neither physical nor intellectual, but is unbounded spiritual Being. The method of approach must befit the nature of the object approached, the pathway can be known only when the destination is known. The indivisible, absolute and conscious nature of the Reality signifies that life on earth should be lived according to the rigid laws of dispassion towards external existence and active awareness of the Self as the unlimited being. It also shows that all forms of physical and even intellectual indulgence are deviations from the eternal truth and that every desire for objectivation of consciousness is suicidal in the real sense. The good life which is in conformity with the nature of Truth should be, therefore, free from the oppressions of hatred, lust, greed and falsehood in all their forms of manifestation. The

Upanishadic intuitive declaration lays down that the righteous life should be lived with mental peace, self-restraint, absence of agitative activity, fortitude, faith in Truth and concentration of mental consciousness. Acting against this rule means refusing to abide by the essential nature of the Ultimate Reality. Discrimination born of the purified reason coupled with an intense longing experience the Eternal Truth is the greatest requisite in the path to Perfection. The important point to be remembered is that the better and the more intelligent the conception of the Truth, the more valuable is the life lived, the easier is the process and the more quickly is the Reality realised.

Waking Experience Is As False As Dream Experience

I

Both in waking and in dream Objects are 'perceived' or 'seen' As different from the subject. The character of 'being seen' Is common to both kinds of experience. There is subject-object-relationship In waking as well as in dream This is the similarity between the two. "Something is seen as an object" means Something is other than the Self. The experience of the not-self is illusory. For, if the not-self were real, The Self would be limited and unreal. The illusory experience of the not-self Is common to both waking and dream. In waking, the mind experiences through the senses; In dream, the mind alone experiences. In both the states, the mind alone experiences Whether externally or internally. Dream is transcended by waking; Waking is transcended by Turiya. Hence, both dream and waking are contradicted. Waking contradicts dream, And dream contradicts waking. When the one is, the other is not. Neither of the two is continuously existent. This proves the unreality of both.

II

Duality is not real, Because duality is the opposite of eternity. Without duality there is no perception. Hence, anything that is perceived is unreal Whether in dream or in waking. Dream is real when there is no waking. Waking is real when there is no dream. Hence, both are unreal experiences. They depend on one another for their existence. One cannot say whether he is dreaming or waking

Without referring one state to another state. Desires are the rulers of all experiences In waking and also in dream. Waking is physical functioning of desires, Dream is mental functioning of desires. The senses are moved by desires in waking,

The mind is moved by desires in dreaming. Both the states are like flowing streams They do not persist for ever in one state That which persists for ever is real.

Dream and waking have a beginning and an end. Change is the character of all perceived objects.

Change implies nonexistence at the beginning And also at the end.

That which does not exist at the beginning And does not exist at the end Does not exist in the middle also. Therefore waking is unreal like dream.

III

It may be objected by some that Waking is real, because it is the cause of dream, And dream is not the cause of waking. But this objection is without support. If waking is a cause, It must be real; If it is real, It must exist for ever. Waking itself is without reality, For it does not exist always. If the cause itself is

unreal, How can it produce a real effect?Both these are unreal states. One who eats bellyful in waking state May feel hungry in the dream state And vice versa.Things appear to be real only In a particular condition. They are not real always. That which is not always real, Is an appearance and so unreal.

IV

Anything that has got a form is unreal. Forms are special modes of cognition and perception. They are not ultimate. In waking there are physical forms. In dreaming there are mental forms. Anyhow all are forms only Limited in space and time. A form lasts only so long As that particular mental condition lasts. When there is a different mental condition The forms of experience also change. This is why the form of the world vanishes When Self-realisation is attained.

V

Both in dreaming and waking External perceptions are considered as real And internal functions as unreal (i.e., they are ignored). If in waking we make a distinction Between real and unreal, In dream also we do the same thing. Dream is real as long as it lasts, Waking also is real as long as it lasts. Dream is unreal from the standpoint of waking, And equally so is waking to the dreamer. From the standpoint of the highest Truth, Waking is as false as dream.

VI

It may be said that objects in waking state Serve some definite purpose And those of dream do not serve a purpose. This argument is incorrect. Because, the nature of serving a purpose Which is seen in objects in waking Is contradicted by dream and vice versa. The utility and objective worth Of things, states, etc., in waking Are cancelled in the dream state, even as the conditions and experiences in dream are invalidated in waking.

Objects act as means to ends. Only in a particular condition And not in all conditions. The causal relationship of waking Is rendered nugatory in dream and vice versa. The logical sequence of waking Is valid to itself alone and not to dreaming. So is dream valid to its own state. Waking and dreaming have their own notions of propri- ety, And each is stultified by the other, Though each appears to be real to itself. Thus the validity of both the states Is rejected.

VII

It may be contended that Objects of dream are queer, fantastic and unnatural, And, hence, waking cannot be like dream. But the experiences in dream, However grotesque or abnormal, Are not abnormal to the dreamer. They appear fantastic only in A different state, viz., waking. One cannot say what is really fantastic And what is normal and real. The mind gives values to objects And its conception of normality and abnormality Changes according to the state in which it is. There is no permanent standard Of normality, beauty or decorum, Either in waking or in dreaming, Which may hold good for all times; The dreamer has his own conception Of space, time and causation, Even as the waking one has his own notions. One state is absurd when compared to the other. This shows that both states are illogical And, therefore, absurd from the highest standpoint.

VIII

The world of waking experience is unreal, Because it is the imagination of the cosmic mind.

The fact that in Self-realisation There is absolute cessation of phenomenal experience Shows that all phenomena are unreal. Eternal forms are the expressions Of the internal Sankalpas or willings. Therefore, external objects have no real value. They appear to exist only As long as the Sankalpas exist. The senses externalise the internal ideas And present them in the forms of objects. When the Sankalpas are drawn within The world of objective experience vanishes in toto. The Infinite Subject, viz., the Self alone remains. There is no such thing as Externality and internality in reality. The ego and the non-ego, The subject as well as the object, All are imaginations of the mind alone.

IX

It may be said that Objects seen in waking are not Mere mental imaginations, Because the objects of waking experience Are seen by other people also, Whether or not one's mind cognises them. But it is seen that In the dream state also Objects of experience are open to The perception of other people, Though the people as well as the objects; Are all subjective imaginations. It may be said that in waking We perceive through the sense-organs And not merely through ideas. But it is seen that in dream also We perceive through the sense-organs Belonging to the dream-state,

Which are not less real than those of waking state. As dream is unreal, Waking also must be unreal.

X

The objective world of waking experience cannot have independent existence, because it is relative to the subject Which cognises or perceives it. The object is called an object Just because there is a perceiving subject. Similarly, a subject is called a subject Just because there is a perceived object. Neither of the two is self-existent. And, therefore, both prove themselves to be unreal. Subject and object appear In the form of cause and effect. Without a cause there is no effect. Without an effect nothing can be a cause. The conception of causation itself is illogical. The mind perceives and recognises objects Only by relating one thing to another. The whole world of perception Is a bundle of unintelligible relationships Which the mind tries to organise into causes and ef- fects. Further there is no causation at all, Because, cause and effect are continuous. There cannot be a lapse of time In which the cause remains unchanged. If the cause can exist unchanged for some time There is no reason why it should change at any time at all. Either there is continuous causation, Or no causation at all. If causation is continuous Cause and effect become identical Being inseparable from one another. If they are identical It means there is no causation at all. If there is no causation There is no world of experience also. The whole causal scheme is illogical Because it either requires the existence of a first uncaused cause Or it itself is meaningless.

There is no meaning in saying that There is a first uncaused cause For, thereby, we create a beginning for time. If causation were real It would never be possible to get rid of it. But Self-realisation breaks the chain of causation. Hence, causation is false, And consequently, the world of experience Also is false. As in dream also there is experience of the causal series, The waking world is false like the dream world.

Anvaya and Vyatireka

Anvaya means the presence of one thing along with the particular another, and Vyatireka means its absence when that other is absent. It is synthesis and analysis (positive and negative method).

The names and forms are different and illusory, but the one, underlying essence of Atman is the same in all forms. It is the only reality. Negate the forms and grasp the essence by meditation on Atman. Separate the Atman from the five Kosas (sheaths) just as you draw the pith from the Munja grass or a reed. Just as you take out the small diamond that is mixed with different kinds of pulses and cereals by separating it from them, so also take out this Atman by separating it from the five sheaths (physical, vital, mental, intellectual and blissful entities of man). Where the five sheaths exist, there the Atman also exists. Where the five sheaths do not exist, even there the Atman exists. Therefore, the Atman is independent of the five sheaths.

During the state of dreaming there is no consciousness of the existence of the material body, but the presence of the spirit is experienced, as without the spirit it is not possible to have the consciousness of what occurs in a dream. It thus follows that in the state of dreaming there is the presence of the Spirit and the absence of the material body. This coexistence of the Spirit in all conditions is called Anvaya and the non-coexistence of the material or the physical and the other sheaths with the Spirit in certain circumstances is called Vyatireka.

Similarly, in the state of sound sleep one is not conscious of the existence of the subtle body (Linga Sarira), but the presence of the Spirit is proved by the fact that after waking, everyone has the consciousness that during the state of sound sleep he was perfectly ignorant of everything, and this consciousness is the result of previous experience and in that state there is no one else than the Spirit to receive that experience. This coexistence of the Spirit with the Karana Sarira is called Anvaya, and the non-coexistence of the Linga Sarira with the Spirit in the state of sound sleep is called Vyatireka. It is thus clear that the Spirit is present in all conditions while the material and subtle bodies are not present in certain state. It thus follows that while the Spirit is eternal, these two bodies are not so.

The Annamaya Kosa is the material body and it has been shown that the Spirit exists without the material body in certain conditions. It follows, therefore, that this Annamaya Kosa is not the Spirit. It has also been shown above that the Spirit exists without the subtle body in certain conditions. The three sheaths Pranamaya Kosa, Manomaya Kosa and Vijnanamaya Kosa are connected with the Linga Sarira, and receive their different names on account of the difference in the quality and condition of their constituents, all of which together go to form the Linga Sarira. It, therefore, follows that these three sheaths also are not the Spirit.

The first four sheaths having been differentiated from the Spirit, it now remains to differentiate the Anandamaya Kosa. This sheath is connected with the Karana Sarira. In the state of Samadhi, i.e., perfect absorption of thought into the one object of meditation, viz., the Supreme Spirit, there is absence of Karana Sarira, which is the same thing as perfect ignorance, but the presence of the Spirit is experienced in that state. This coexistence of the Spirit with the state of Samadhi is called Anvaya, and the non-coexistence of the Karana Sarira with the Spirit is called Vyatireka. It thus follows that in certain conditions the Spirit does not coexist with the Karana Sarira, and as the Anandamaya Kosa is connected with the Karana Sarira, it must be said that in those conditions the Spirit does not coexist with the Anandamaya Kosa. The conclusion, therefore, is that this sheath also is not the Spirit.

It has thus been shown that the Spirit exists independently of the several sheaths under certain conditions. It is an axiom that whatever exists apart from certain other things is different from those things. It, therefore, follows that the Spirit is different from the five sheaths.

In the syllogistic argument 'where there is pitcher, there is clay', the negative proposition would be 'where there is no clay, there is no pitcher'. This is the common illustration of the Anvaya-Vyatireka method in logic. Applying this process to the three states and the Atman, we see from experience that 'when waking exists, Atman exists' (Anvaya). But the Vyatireka method cannot be put as 'when Atman does not exist, waking does not exist', because, in the method of Anvaya-Vyatireka which is applied in the Vedanta philosophy to prove the difference of the Atman from the three states of consciousness, we cannot, in the beginning itself, take for granted that the Atman is consciousness, because the very purpose of the method is to show that the Atman is independent consciousness. Therefore, in order to avoid the fallacy of petitio principii and also to avoid the conception of the nonexistence of the Atman which is involved in the argument, we have to put the statement thus:

'When waking exists, Atman exists' (Anvaya). 'When waking does not exist, Atman exists' (Vyatireka). But we should not say as a Vyatireka 'when Atman does not exist, waking does not exist', because, here, we already assume that the consciousness of waking is possible only because of the Consciousness of the Atman which is yet to be proved. Thus, here is a begging of the question. Further, it is absurd to say 'when Atman does not exist, because none can experience the nonexistence of the Atman. The whole argument may be put in the following way:

When waking exists, Atman exists' (Anvaya). 'When waking does not exist, Atman exists' (Vyatireka). Thus, Atman is independent of the waking state. When dreaming exists, Atman exists' (Anvaya).

'When dreaming does not exist, Atman exists' (Vyatireka). Thus, Atman is independent of the dreaming state.

'When sleeping exists, Atman exists' (Anvaya). When sleeping does not exist, Atman exists' (Vyatireka). Thus, Atman is independent of the sleeping state.

Hence, to put it collectively, When the three states exist, Atman exists' (Anvaya). 'When the three states do not exist, Atman exists' (Vyatireka). Thus, Atman is independent of the three states.

Because, also, when one state exists the other states do not exist, it is proved that the three states are not real, since reality is that which exists at all times.

Therefore, the consciousness which is experienced being real, because none can separate consciousness from existence-this consciousness must be the nature of that which is independent and real, namely, the Atman. And because one can never conceive of his own nonexistence, the Atman must also be eternal.

The same method may be applied to the five sheaths and we will, accordingly, come to the conclusion that 'when five sheaths exist, Atman exists' (Anvaya). 'When five sheaths do not exist, Atman exists' (Vyatireka). Thus, Atman is independent of the five sheaths.

This process is also applied to Satchidananda is independent of Nama and Rupa, viz., 'When Nama and Rupa exist, Satchidananda exists' (Anvaya). 'When Nama and Rupa do prove that not exist, Satchidananda exists' (Vyatireka). This shows that Satchidananda exists at all times whether Nama and Rupa exist or not.

To put this in another way:

1. Where there is pitcher, there is clay' (Anvaya). Where there is no clay, there is no pitcher' (Vyatireka).
2. 'Where there is no waking, there is Atman' (Anvaya). Where there is Atman, there is no waking' (Vyatireka).
3. Where there is no dreaming, there is Atman' (Anvaya). 'Where there is Atman, there is no dreaming' (Vyatireka).
4. Where there is no sleeping, there is Atman' (Anvaya). Where there is Atman, there is no sleeping' (Vyatireka).
5. 'Where there are no three states, there is Atman' (Anvaya). 'Where there is Atman, there are no three states' (Vyatireka).
6. 'Where there are no five sheaths, there is Atman' (Anvaya). 'Where there is Atman, there are no five sheaths' (Vyatireka).
7. Where there are no Nama and Rupa, there is Satchidananda' (Anvaya). 'Where there Satchidananda, there are no Nama and Rupa (Vyatireka).

Chapter VI

UPANISHAD SADHANA

The Upanishads constitute the central basis of Hindu Religion and Philosophy. They are the Vedanta or the end of the Vedas, the culmination of Knowledge. Nothing can be a match to the wonderous suggestiveness of the Upanishads. They have satisfied the greatest thinkers of the world and they have pacified the greatest of spiritual men here. Nothing that went before or after has been able to surpass the Upanishads in the depth of Wisdom and the message of Satisfaction and Peace. Dadhyanch, Uddalaka, Sanatkumara, Sandilya and Yajnavalkya are some of the outstanding philosophers and sages of the Upanishads who have lit up the torch to the path of Perfection. The Upanishads mainly preach Knowledge through philosophising. They are the textbook, for the seekers after the Self. They are styled by different names: Brahma Vidya, Adhyatmasastra, Vedanta, Jnana. One who practises the teachings of the Upanishads attains to the Supreme. He breaks the knot of the heart, clears all doubts and destroys all sins. He enters into the All. He is liberated from embodiment. He becomes immortal. He becomes the Self of all. He is an Apta Kama. He is really blessed. He crosses over sorrow. He crosses over sin. He does not return to the mortal coil. He exists as the Absolute.

The Upanishads are a book of Spiritual Knowledge. The Supreme is pervading all that appears here. One should therefore really enjoy by renouncing the sense of worldliness. He has no reason to covet other's property.

Life is not a misery. One should live for hundred years by performing action without attachment. Life is not a bondage when it is looked with the proper light. Such a man of proper knowledge looks on all beings as his own Self and his Self as all beings. To him everything sorrow of any kind.

The Supreme Reality is indescribable. It is beyond the reach of the mind and the senses. It is beyond even the intellect. It is the light of all else, nothing is a light to It. Speech cannot express It. Mind cannot think It. Intellect cannot understand It. Senses cannot perceive It. Such a wonderful Being is the Truth. Brahma-Jnana is not a knowledge of something but becoming Absolute Knowledge itself. It is the Infinite subject if speech can be permitted to express like that. It is an experience and not a perception. It is Absoluteness and is, therefore, beyond the conception of duality and pairs of opposites. The greatest blessedness is to know That, and he is an unfortunate man who dies without the knowledge of It.

Mortal things are ephemeral and so are not worth pursuing. Even a whole life of many years is only very slight. It is nothing. There is no use of enjoying object. Man is not satisfied with wealth. He craves to become immortal even against his own conscience. Unfortunately he pursues after the pleasant as against the really good. The good is one thing and the pleasant another. The one liberates and the other binds. One should not catch the pleasant though it is tempting for a moment.

The Atman is not born, nor does It die. It has not come from anywhere and it has not become anything. Unborn, constant, eternal, primeval, this one is not slain when the body is slain. This Atman is hidden in the deep core of the heart of beings. It cannot be attained by any amount of reasoning, study or instruction. It comes only through the Supreme Grace. A man of bad conduct, who has not ceased from crookedness, cannot hope to attain the Atman.

The road to the Supreme is clothed with pricking thorns. It is sharp like the edge of a razor, hard to tread, a very difficult path! It can be trodden only with the help of knowledge obtained from men of wisdom. Knowing That, one is liberated from the terrible mouth of death.

The mind and the senses always run outwards. Only the man of self-discipline and perseverance can gaze inward and experience the state of Atman as it really is. The childish who have no knowledge of the Truth, run after external pleasures and they fall into the net of widespread Death. Only the wise, knowing the state of Immortality, seek not the stable Brahman among things which are impermanent here.

One need not be anxious to possess things of the world. Whatever is here, that is there; whatever is there, that is here. He obtains death after death who perceives diversity in the world. There is nothing as 'many' here actually. The One Supreme Substance appears as many things, clothed in different names, forms and actions.

The Atman or the Brahman has no connection with the world of change. As the sun is not sullied by the faults of the eyes, the Antaratman is not sullied by the defects of the world. As one fire has entered the world and becomes corresponding in form to every form, so the One Antaratman of all things is corresponding in form to every form, and yet is outside all these.

The goodness, the light, the pleasure and the beauty of the world is not to be found there even in name. Even the splendour of the Sun and the grandeur of the creator is superseded by the Absolute. That State is experienced when the senses cease to work together with the mind and when the intellect does not move, and when there is mere consciousness. When all desires which are lodged in the heart are liberated, then the mortal becomes Immortal. Herein he attains Brahman.

The State of becoming the Absolute is not a loss of all that we love, but is the perfect fulfilment of all our aspirations. Our finitude is broken, imperfections destroyed and we are installed in the blessed State of Eternal Satisfaction. All our desires are fulfilled at one and the same time. We become the Source of Infinite Joy and Bliss. We experience birthlessness deathlessness. None is superior to us.

What is that by knowing which everything else becomes known? That is Brahman. That is to be known. Brahman is Truth, Knowledge, Infinity, Bliss. Brahman is Bhuma where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else and understands nothing else. It rests on nothing else. On It everything else rests. One who knows this rejoices in his own Self and rests contented in his own Self.

Sacrifices cannot bring salvation. They are mere temptations which bind one to birth and death. The deluded people think that mere sacrifice and charity constitute eternal blessedness. They are mistaken. What is not the effect of action is not attained by any amount of action. Brahman which is not done cannot be attained by what is done. Having scrutinised the nature of the world, a wise man should arrive at indifference and dispassion. He must approach a preceptor and learn Brahma-Vidya from him. Such a fortunate soul rends asunder the knot of ignorance.

There is no other duty for man except meditation on the Self. Dismissing all else, one should establish himself in the Self. There remains nothing to be done or attained, when the Self is experienced. For that Brahman, the Immortal is before, behind, to right and to left, stretched forth below and above. Brahman is all this, the great, the widest extent. There is nothing but Brahman. All this is Brahman.

Truth alone triumphs, never untruth. Falsehood and lie, phantom or unreality cannot succeed in its efforts. The real alone is an enduring being. That Real is experienced Knowledge. Through Meditation coupled with

Whatever a man of purified nature makes clear in and that he fulfils. Therefore one should have pure and perfect resolves. He that desires for objects is born again and again for fulfilling those desires. He whose desires are satisfied, who is perfected, his desires vanish away here itself.

The state of Moksha or Final Liberation is a very glorious one. Those blessed souls who attain that State enter into everything. They become the All. They are free from passion, are tranquil and perfect in the highest sense. They are liberated beyond death. They become unified with the Supreme Imperishable. As the flowing rivers in the ocean disappear, leaving name and form, 80 the wise man being liberated from name and form reaches the Supreme which is Absolute. One who knows Brahman becomes Brahman. He crosses over sorrow and death. He becomes Immortal.

The Supreme Self is experienced in the fourth state of consciousness. There it is neither this nor that; it has no quality in particular. It is everything. It is peaceful, blessed and non-dual. It is the cessation of all phenomena. That is the Atman. That should be known and realised. That is the purpose in life.

The Jivanmukta or the liberated sage experiences that he is everything. He is the tree and the mountain. He is excellent like the sun. He is a shining treasure, wise, immortal and indestructible. He is the food and the eater of food. He is the knower, knowledge and the known in one. He is the whole universe in himself.

Bliss is the Ultimate Nature of the Reality. From Bliss all this comes forth. By Bliss all this lives. Into Bliss all this enters in the end. The Bliss of all the fourteen worlds is nothing when compared to the Bliss of Brahman. All Bliss of the world is only a shadow of Self-Bliss. Self-Bliss is the most Supreme. It is the Only Real Bliss. Other sources of bliss are mere fleeting phantoms; other bliss is only a feeble apology for the Supreme Self-Bliss. The greatest bliss which one can conceive of either in earth or in heaven is a mere naught in the presence of the pure Brahman-Bliss or Self-Bliss One has not got to run to external objects for obtaining bliss. The Self is the source of all bliss. The Self is everything, all knowledge and all bliss.

All this is guided by Consciousness, and is based on Consciousness. The world has Consciousness for its guidance. Consciousness is Brahman. I am Brahman. That thou art. This Self is Brahman. These are the metaphysical explanations of Brahman. “All this is Brahman” is the ultimate realisation. One who knows this is not reborn on earth. He becomes immortal

.Just as by one piece of clay, everything made of clay is known; just as by one nugget of gold, everything made of gold is known; just as by a single pair of nail-scissors, everything made of iron is known,-all modification is merely a distinction of words, a mere name, the reality is just only clay, gold or iron, so is this Supreme Teaching; the world is only Brahman, by knowing Brahman everything else is known.

Existence alone was in the beginning. This was one alone without a second. From that everything else was produced. The modifications of it are only apparent. There is no world except mere names and forms, mysteriously connected with one another. There is no sun or moon except mere colours or fictitious forms. When colours are distinguished, the sun loses his sunhood, the moon loses its moonhood, things lose their thingness. Brahman alone exists.

One who is guided by a preceptor knows the truth easily. Otherwise he may miss the path in spiritual blindness. The preceptor teaches: “That which is the finest Essence-this whole world has that as its soul. That is the Reality. That is the Atman. That thou art.”

The Infinite Fullness (Plenum) alone is Bliss. There is no Bliss in the small finite things. Only the Infinite is Bliss. There one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, understands nothing else that is the Infinite Fullness. Where one sees something else, hears something else, understands something else that is the small finite. The Infinite Fullness is the Immortal, and the small finite is mortal. That Infinite Fullness alone is everywhere. It is all this.

In purity of food, there is purity of nature. In purity of nature, there is established memory. In established memory, there results the release from all knots of the heart. One becomes Immortal.

The Self alone is dear. One who loves something other than the Self loses what he loves. The Self is the Absolute. One who knows this becomes indestructible. He is only a beast who considers he and his God are different. Not for the sake of this all this is dear, but for the sake of the Self this all is dear. By knowing that Self, everything else becomes automatically known, for the Self indeed is this all..

The Self is an Ocean without a shore and a surface. It is mere Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. Where there is duality as it were, one can speak to the other, see the other and understand the other, but where everything is just one’s own Self, then who can speak to whom, who can see whom, who can understand whom? That is the supreme end. That is the supreme blessing. That is the supreme Bliss. On a part of this Bliss other creatures are living.

He who is without desire, who is freed from desire, whose desire is satisfied, whose desire is the Self-his Pranas do not depart. He being Brahman Itself, becomes Brahman immediately.

The Jivanmukta is like a child. He is a source of all knowledge, but he behaves like an idiot. He is a true Brahmana who has known Brahman.

He who dwells in all things. And yet is other than all things, whom all things know not, in whose body are all things, who controls all things from within-He is the Soul, the Inner Controller, the Immortal. He is the unseen Seer, the unheard Hearer, the unthought Thinker, the nonunderstood Understander. Other than He there is nothing whatsoever at any time. One who dies without knowing this Supreme has died in vain, he is a wretched man. He is a great man who dies knowing the Supreme, he is a true Brahmana.

Verily, that great, unborn Soul, undecaying, undying, Immortal, fearless, is Brahman. Brahman is fearless. One who attains this becomes the fearless Brahman. That is full. This is full. From the Full, the full does proceed. Withdrawing the full from the Full, the Full alone still remains. This is the gist of the Upanishads in whole.

The Sadhana of the Upanishads is mainly of the type of the analogy of Bhramara-Kita-Nyaya. Meditation on the Truths declared in the Upanishads is Sadhana. They are of a very highly advanced nature, and only advanced students can take up this method of Sadhana. The name of this method of Sadhana is Jnana-Yoga. It is an intellectual analysis for the sake of perfection in Intuition. The Jnana Yogi starts his Sadhana directly from the Vijnana or the intellect. He is not guided by emotions, not by the regulations of Prana and the like. He stills all emotions and centres his mind in the Supreme Self. He attains Sadyo-

Mukti or Immediate Salvation. He enters into everything and becomes the Self of everything. This is the end of ideal of human life.

The Message of the Upanishads

Human Quest

Happiness! The one ceaseless quest in which man is engaged is happiness. He thinks, speaks, moves, works, eats, drinks, procreates,-in short, lives-in the hope of finding happiness. No one wants to suffer.

It is the desire to escape suffering that drives a baby to its mother's lap; it is the same desire that draws urchins together and makes them play with their dolls and revel in sweetmeats; it is this desire to find joy that goads a youth on to the pleasure-centres of woman, food, intoxicating drinks, gambling play; it is this quest of happiness that drives man to seek wealth, power, name and fame, and material comforts; it is this desire that impels him to invent newer and newer contrivances to add to his creature-comforts, and weapons to add to his glory, power and wealth!

Alas! Happiness eludes his grasp!

Frankenstein's Monster

What does he get, instead? Every type of sense-enjoyment has hidden beneath the velvety cover, a ferocious tigress! Lust eats away his vitals. Intoxicating drinks bring on nervousness. Artificial ways of living give him any number of diseases. Desires haunt his dreams. Ambitions cloud his intelligence. Wealth brings with it restlessness. Family means worry! The senses to which he looked for happiness enslave him and under their crushing weight, man cries aloud: "Where is happiness?"

Even if he is saved from these, even if fortune smiles at him, the inevitable Old Age creeps in. The pleasure-centres which sustained him during his youth and manhood, haunt him now! Crest-fallen, he wails: "Where is happiness?"

Ah! Thou, the Great Leveller-Death! No one has escaped thy clutches. The king on his throne, the poet in his study, the painter in his studio, the vile immoral man in the arms of his beloved, the glutton at the table, the gambler at the den, the merry-maker at the club-thy mantle falls equally on all! Every day millions of human beings leave their mortal coil on this planet: yet the few that remain imagine they will never die-madness cannot go farther. Name, fame, friends, relations, wealth, power, position-nothing follows the man beyond his last breath. His hands feel not, his eyes look not his ears hear not, his tongue tastes not, his nose smells not, the objects which were dear to his heart just few moments ago! Where is happiness?

Wealth breeds dacoits. Name and fame creates enemies, Power and ambitions result in wars and riots. Selfishness brings on famines and internal revolts Where, then, is happiness?

That question has remained unanswered!

True happiness can be had only in the Bhuma, the Infinite. There is no pleasure in the finite Infinite is Immortal, Eternal. Finite is perishable transitory.

That happiness which will be perennial, of which we cannot be deprived, which will not lead us to, or give room for, a tinge of misery-in other words Bliss Absolute that is true happiness! That is the happiness worth longing for. That is Bhuma.

That state in which one sees no other, one hears no other, one feels no other, one thinks of no other etc., that is Bhuma! Unity or Oneness is Bhuma. Diversity is finite.

Atman Everywhere

One who has had this transcendental experience, sees the Atman and Atman alone everywhere, within him and without him, too. The Atman is all-pervading homogeneous essence. The entire Universe is one mass of consciousness. All beings, the entire humanity, plant life, animal kingdom and even what is commonly known as inanimate objects-have their root in Consciousness. That is the Atman! Bhuma is the direct subjective experience of this Infinite. Bliss-true, eternal, infinite happiness can be had only in this perception of Unity.

I Am Fearless

One who sees His own Atman in all beings, and all beings in his own Atman-he becomes fearless. He is not deluded by the objects of the senses. Sorrow melts away before his sunny gaze of bliss. He is not afraid of anything; nor is any one afraid of him, Bliss fills his very being. And, this bliss is infectious-every one who comes into contact with him is injected with this bliss. Not only has he no enemies in the universe, but even avowed foes, give up their enmity in his presence! He is not particularly attached to any object or being. His heart flows out to one and all animate and inanimate. He perceives Unity in diversity.

Time and space bow before him and withdraw. He lives in the one Great Present. There is neither a past nor a future for him. There is neither a 'here' nor a 'there' Before his inner eye is laid out the grand panorama of the three periods of time-a Cosmic Vision. He sees nothing but Pure Consciousness.

In the crying babe, playing boy, fiery youth, puzzled man, and in the disillusioned old man he perceives the same Atman. The apparent change does not belong to the Atman. Nay, even death is not the end. It is but another apparent change. Life continues beyond. Man sleeps with one encasement and wakes up after a short while with another encasement! Death has lost its dread for him! He has achieved the impossible-he has eluded the grasp of Death itself!

I Am Bliss

He has acquired the knowledge of the Atman. He has negated the false notion that happiness comes out of sense-objects; the wrong identification of the Unborn Atman with the body and mind vanishes.

He has got That obtaining which man desires nothing more! He is absolutely desireless, for there is nothing to be got by him! He is full of the ineffable Bliss which comes out of the realisation of the Self.

Look Within!

The senses have been created with a natural tendency to flow out towards the objective universe. This externalisation dissipates the rays of the mind, weakens the intellect and blinds the eye of intuitive perception. Unity is falsely represented as diversity; the untrue appears to be True; pain appears to be

pleasure; and shadow holds out greater charms than the Substance Itself. This is the path of 'Preya' (the Pleasant) which the dullwitted ignorant man pursues.

A rare hero, however, desirous of perceiving the Inner Atman, turns his gaze within himself. He withdraws the rays of his mind: the senses are drawn into him as the limbs of a tortoise are drawn into the shell. The mental modifications are stopped. Buddhi is made to surrender itself at the feet of the Atman. Ego is emptied, so that his entire being might be filled by the Light of the Self! This is the path of 'Sreya' which the wise one pursues.

Within is the resplendent Atman shining with the luminosity of crores of suns. The sun, the moon, the stars and everything that is endowed with the light here shines with the brilliance borrowed from this Atman. The seer perceives that the senses have no independent power of their own. The Atman is the eye of the eyes, the ear of the ears, the mind of minds-the Inner Self! Pleasure lay not in the objects nor in the senses: but it was within one's own Self, attributed by mistake to the objects!

Not indeed for the sake of all this is everything dear, but it is for the love of one's own Atman are all the worlds dear! This Atman should be perceived; one should hear about this Atman; one should think of, and meditate upon this Inner Atman! For in That lies Bliss.

To him who thus realises that His Atman is the All-pervading Essence of all that is here, belongs Eternal Bliss-to none else! He has found the source of perennial bliss, in his own Inner Self. Eternal Bliss within-and he has been wasting his life in vainly searching for it in the external world! He is no wiser than the musk-deer which wanders about and exhausts its energies in an endeavour to locate the source of the scent, which is all the time within itself!

Nectar of Therefore, one who wishes to taste the immortality should

Turn the gaze, draw the Indriyas,

Still the mind, sharpen the intellect,

Chant OM with feeling, meditate on Atman!

He perceives the Atman within himself. He perceives everything within himself! He realises that the Atman pervades the entire Universe, envelopes it as it were. Though the Atman is One in truth It has put on this form of diversity! The Atman is unaffected by the conditions of the objects, as indeed the sun which shines as the very eye of the whole world is not affected by the defects of the objects.

The Atman is Akarta, non-doer; It is Abhokta, non-enjoyer! Realisation of this Truth enables man to transcend Samsara or the cycle of births and deaths. The sage who realises this Truth enjoys eternal felicity, none else. Immortality and Eternal Bliss are his!

Grace

This Atmic knowledge is not obtained through much learning, by frequent hearing of the scriptures nor by a sharp intellect. The Atman reveals Itself to one whom It chooses! Without His Grace, man will not be able to lift a finger! Complete self-surrender to the Lord within the inner chambers of the heart is needed. All Sadhanas aim at the achievement of this one result-annihilation of the ego. So long as the ego holds its head aloft, no progress is possible in Sadhana. God-realisation or Self-realisation is

impossible till the least trace of this ego is completely removed. Lord Krishna's Full Flute is considered symbolic of this Truth: empty thyself, I will fill thee!

When the ego is destroyed, the void created thus is soon filled by the Lord's Grace which flows in abundance. By the recipient of the Lord's Grace alone is this Atman realised. That is the emphatic declaration of the Upanishads.

The Paths

Performance of the duties enjoined by the Scriptures on man in the various stages of his life here and that with the proper perspective, with the full knowledge of the transcendental nature of the Atman, is considered one of the paths for the attainment of the Atman. Great emphasis is again laid on truth, performance of austerities, true knowledge and Brahmacharya. Renunciation held a high place, too.

It is clear from the above that the Upanishads sought to aim at the synthetic development of the Yogi. Jnana is the culmination. No liberation is possible without Wisdom. Vairagya is of paramount importance. Renunciation is necessary; but inner renunciation born out of true knowledge that the Atman is Akarta and Abhokta, and that it is not affected by the actions of the sense-organs, is considered preferable to external renunciation of physical actions. Man should perform his duties, in the proper spirit. Such actions do not bind him: but on the other hand they help him to liberate himself. Devotion to the Self and the invocation of its Grace is also a sine qua non for the achievement of success in the Path.

Varnashramas

It is in the light of the above that the four Ashramas of life assume a marked importance.

During the period his life with his Guru, the Brahmachari acquires a knowledge of the Scriptures and a theoretical knowledge of the Supreme, too He learns to discipline himself, to curb his lower passions, to develop the sterling virtues of humility, obedience, adaptability, tranquillity, perseverance, etc.

Grihasthashrama was not, in days of yore, meant to be made an excuse for letting loose the diabolical forces within the youth which had perforce to be suppressed during his Gurukulavasa. The advice which the Brahmachari receives at the conclusion of his period of study under the Guru is such as to enable him to translate the theoretical knowledge he had thus far acquired into actual practice. "Speak the truth. Do your duty. Never swerve from the study of the Vedas. Do not cut off the thread of offspring after giving the preceptor the fee he desire... Never neglect your welfare, prosperity and study and teaching of the Vedas. Attend to your duties to gods and manes. May the mother be your God. May the father be your God. May the preceptor be your God. May the guest be your God. Do such actions as are free from blemish. Only good actions should be performed... Charity should be performed with faith, modesty and in plenty..." Golden words of good counsel these! It need hardly be pointed out how most of the ills the world is suffering from today have their root in the negligence by the householders of these duties

When his mind has been purified by the proper performance of right actions, and in the fullness of time. A man renounces Grihasthashrama and resorts to the forest, practises Tapasya there, meditates and realises the Atman! What an easy ladder, every rung smooth and pleasant, had our ancients made for us!

The division of the community into four Varnas had a deep significance. The Brahmins spent their times in mastering the Vedas and Sastras; they engaged themselves in preaching Dharma; they meditated and actually lived the truth-'All this is the Self alone!'

The Kshatriyas ruled the kingdom, maintained law and order, preserved the peace of the nation, protected their subjects and devoted themselves to the welfare of the Brahmins through whose contact and grace the Kshatriyas endeavoured to live in the truth –'All this is the Self!'

The Vaisyas and the Sudras were heart and soul on the service of the community striving every moment to realise 'All this is the Self!'

A Panacea for all Ills

When humanity started drifting away from the path of righteousness, set in the degeneration of mankind Man forgot his essential divine nature. The chimney of his Antahkarana, within which shone the resplendent Atman, acquired such a thick layer of the soot of selfish pursuit of material pleasures that a vision of the light was made utterly impossible. Darkness enveloped the earth. The baser passions that revelled in such darkness got the upper hand. Their free play has had consequences of which we are all too well aware today! Wars, riots, famines, hatred, ill-will, suspicion, jealousy,-in fact, all the evils that even ever existed on the face of the earth came to dwell in it, all at the same time!

O Man! Beware, Arise, Awake! Resort to the Lotus Feet of saints and seers. By serving them with humility, faith and devotion, acquire the knowledge of the Atman. That and that alone is the panacea for all the ills from which the world is suffering today. Only the direct perception of the Atman within the heart and the realisation that the same Atman resided in the heart of every being in the universe can forge permanent bonds of brotherhood between man and man. This and this alone can put a sure end once and for all to wars, riots famines and other calamities which periodically reduce the world to a menagerie of wild beasts.

Upanishads on Food

Food As Matter: Its Philosophy

The Upanishads mean by food' that which is experienced by consciousness, either directly by itself or indirectly through certain organs. An object that is presented to a conscious subject is the food of that conscious subject. That which supports or maintains, or preserves a thing is the food of that thing. In short, food is that which feeds and sustains individuality. Hence, in the Upanishads, food is identified with matter. The Maitrayani Upanishad says:

"The conscious person exists in the midst of matter. He is the enjoyer because he enjoys the food of matter (Prakriti). Even this individual soul is food for him; its producer is matter. Hence, what is to be enjoyed has three attributes (Gunas). The enjoyer is the person who exists in the midst of matter. Matter is that which is to be enjoyed. Pleasure, pain, delusion, everything is food. There is no knowledge of the essence (i.e., quality) of the source (matter), when it is not manifest. The manifest is food, and the unmanifest also is food" (VI. 10)

It is also further said that the intellect and the other organs are manifested only to enable the conscious subject to experience food or matter. Food is experience as an object when it is manifest and as

ignorance when it is unmanifest. “Food has qualities, but the enjoyer of the food has no qualities. The fact that he is able to enjoy shows that he is consciousness in nature” (VI. 10). The eater of the food is consciousness; the eaten is the matter which is the substance of all kinds of food or objects of experience.

The fact that food is any extraneous experience is brought out by the same Upanishad: “Verily, all beings fly forward day by day with a desire to obtain food. The sun takes food for himself through his rays. Fire blazes up with food. This world was created by Brahma with a desire for food” (VI. 12).

But it should not be thought that food is something quite different from the experiencer, or that matter is absolutely foreign to Spirit. Food is identical with the experiencer. Matter is only a phase of the Spirit. Food is only a manifestation of the Atman. “One should adore food as the Atman” (Maitra. Up. VI. 12). “It is eaten and it eats all things” (Taitt. Up. II. 2). “I am food; I am the eater of food; I, who am food eat the eater of food” (Taitt Up. III. 10).

But, the form of food is not the same as the Atman. Though its essence is identical with the Atman. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says, “Some say that food is Brahman. This is not correct. For, food rots without life (within)” (V. 12). Hence, food which is eaten is not, literally, Brahman. Only the ultimate essence of food is Brahman.

The Prasna Upanishad describes the creation of Food and Life (Rayi and Prana) as two aspects of the One Creator Prajapati. The whole Universe is the effect of the interaction of food and life, or matter and energy, are respectively food and the eater of food. Life or Prana is which the same as energy. Food is converted into energy, and hence, energy eats food. Prana is the eater of food. “Sun is energy and Moon is matter or food. All this is

Merely food, whatever seen or not seen,” (Prasna. Up. 1. 5). Here the sun is compared to the eater of food which is moon. Moon is controlled and enlivened by the light and energy of the sun. Hence sun is the eater of the moon in the form of food. The whole universe is only a manifestation of matter or food in the form of its eater which is energy. Matter and energy are different only figuratively, in their forms and their functions. The truth is that they are the gross and the subtle aspects of Prajapati. Wherever is energy, there is matter, and vice versa. Matter or food has form and energy or the eater of food has no form. Accordingly, Time, as controlled by the sun and as manifest in the forms of Uttarayana and Dakshinayana, Sukla-Paksha and Krishna-Paksha, day and night, is described as constituting food and the eater of food respectively, the bright half being the effect of sun’s light and the dark half the effect of moon or matter or food.

Further, the Prasna Upanishad says that the sun as the centre of life and energy, i.e., as the eater of food, energises the whole world whenever he pervades it with his rays. The importance of sun’s light and heat lies in that these are the life-givers or the feeders of all beings who are confined in matter or food. Food will not grow and beings cannot live without their father who is the life-giving sun. In this Upanishad it is shown that there is no such thing as birth and death except only a formation or a manifestation of the universal food and the universal eater of food, which, too, are not actually two, but simply appearance of the One Creator.

Food and Drink: Their Assimilation and Function

The Chhandogya Upanishad describes the process of the assimilation of food and drink.

Food which is eaten, gets divided into three parts. That which is its coarsest part becomes faeces. That which is medium, the flesh; that which is finest the mind.

Water, which is drunk, gets divided into three parts. That which is its coarsest part becomes urine; that which is medium, the blood; that which is finest, the breath.

Fire which is eaten, gets divided into three parts. That which is its coarsest part becomes bone; that which is medium the marrow; that which is finest , the voice.

The mind consists of food; the breath consists of water, the voice consists of heat.

It is also said that hunger is absorption of food that is eaten by water; thirst is drying up of water that is drunk through heat; death is the extinction of the heat within in the Highest Divinity. Food is like fuel to the fire or heat in the body. When food is not eaten, the mind loses its strength and the fire in the body is extinguished. When water is not drunk, Prana which is the essence of water passes out of the body. That the mind is influenced by the food that is eaten is mentioned in another place in the Chhandogya Upanishad: “In purity of food there is purity of mind; in purity of mind there is established memory; in established memory there results the release from all the knots of the heart,” (VII. 26). After a fast for fifteen days, Svetaketu lost his memory and could not recite the Vedas. But, when, afterwards, he ate food, he regained his memory and recited the Vedas. “If one does not eat for ten days, even though he might live, he becomes a non-seer, a non-hearer, a non-thinker, a non-doer, a non-understander. But on eating food, he becomes a seer, a hearer, a thinker, a doer, an understander. Adore food!” (Chh, Up. VII. 9). This shows to what extent the mind is influenced by the food which is eaten. A person thinks through the mental nature which he consists of and this nature is fed by food. Hence, the food that is eaten should always be Sattvic, for, “Verily, this person consists of the essence of food” (Taitt. Up. II. 1).

Eating Is sacrifice

Food should not be eaten with passion or avidity. Food is called a medicine for life, a remedy for the pains of physical life. It is the Conscious Divine Being within, the real eater of food, that is offered the oblation of food. It is the Agnihotra sacrifice offered to the Atman in the Prana, in the form of Rayi or food. The Maitrayani Upanishad says that both the mind and the food to be eaten should be purified before eating food. The eater of the food should be conscious that the Universal Atman is the real eater of food and, therefore, the food should be offered to this Atman with certain Mantras which are meant to convey the meaning of this sacrifice or internal Dravya-Yajna. The Vaisvanara or Virat is the real giver of life to all and He is the real eater of all foods. This Vaisvanara Agni is the Fire that digests food. “This fire which is within and which digests the food that is eaten is Vaisvanara (the universal living fire)” (Brih. Up. V. 9). It is not the inert element fire but the divine power of Virat in the form of universal living fire that digests food. This fire is called Vaisvanara. Ultimately it is the Atman that is responsible for eating food as well as digesting and assimilating food. Hence, before eating, the Pranas, the mind and the Atman are worshipped and offered the food which is consecrated. The Maitrayani Upanishad says that one should meditate on the Atman before and after eating food. The meaning is that one should not eat food at the cost of the Atman, i.e., one should not forget the Atman in the process of eating. “He who eats with these rules does not again take birth in the material body,” Maitra. Up. VI. 9).

"Food is the form of the all-sustaining Vishnu. Energy is the essence of food. Mind is the essence of Energy. Knowledge is the essence of mind. Bliss is the essence of Knowledge," (Maitra. Up. VI. 13). The Upanishads exalt the process of eating food to divine worship, because the food and the eater of food are forms of Divinity. There it is said, "One should not insult food.

That is the rule. One should not despise food. That is the rule" (Taitt. Up. III. 7. 8).

Even external sacrifice in which food is offered as an oblation becomes the source of the life of all beings. "The offering properly given in sacrifice, rises up to the sun. Through the sun rain is produced. From rain food is caused. By food, all creatures live" (Maitra. Up. VI. 37)

The Arunika Upanishad says that "food should be eaten as a medicine". "From food, verily, all creatures are produced. By food, in fact, they live. Into it also they finally enter. Therefore, it (food) is called a medicine" (Taitt. Up. II. 2). .

Food is eaten only to maintain life and not for the sake of enjoyment. Hence one should eat only the minimum quantity of food as a medicine for life and not to satisfy the passion. "Food is called 'Anna' because it is eaten (Adyate) by all beings and it eats (Atti) all things in the form of Prana the eater of food" (Taitt. Up. III. 7).

Charity of Food

A giver of food prospers. Food should be offered even to uninvited guests with devotion. "One should not refuse anyone (food) in one's house. That is the rule" (Taitt. Up. III. 10). This is the principle of Atithi-Yajna.

Brahman as Food

The highest form of obtaining food is meditation on and realisation of Brahman. "They obtain all food who worship Brahman as food" (Taitt. Up. II. 2). "He who worships food as Brahman attains regions of food and drink" (Chh. Up. VII. 9). Hunger is permanently appeased and thirst is quenched for ever, when Brahman, the Goal of all desires and aspirations, the real Food for spiritual hunger, is realised. The realised sage exclaims, "I am the food! I am the food! I am the food! I am the eater of food! I am the eater of food! I am the eater of food! I, who am food, eat the eater of food! I am the whole universe!" (Taitt. Up. III. 10).

Chapter VII

CATEGORIES IN VEDANTA

Introdution

The Prakriyas or the different categories in the philosophy of Vedanta are the fundamental rudimentary principles with which its ethics and metaphysics are built up. They take into account both the Unmanifest and the Manifest, Brahman, Maya, Isvara, Jiva and the universe. The nature of the Reality, the characteristics of the phenomenal appearance and the constitution of the individual selves are the main themes of Vedantic discussion.

Sri Sankaracharya says that one must possess the fourfold qualification of Sadhana before entering into the study of Tattva-bodha or the Knowledge of the Vedantic Categories and the Nature of the Atman. Sincere aspirants who have an ardent aspiration, faith, perseverance and purity of conscience will find a way of self-transformation through this Knowledge. A thorough understanding of these different categories is necessary before starting to study the actual philosophy of the Advaita Vedanta which abounds with severe logic and penetrating reasoning over the eternal verities of existence.

Categories in Vedanta

1. There are twenty-four Tattvas or Principles of the manifestation of Mula Prakriti:

   The five Tanmatras or rudimentary principles of the elements: Sabda (sound), Sparsa (touch), Rupa (form or colour), Rasa (taste), Gandha (smell). The five Jnana-Indriyas or organs of perception: Srotra (ear), Tvak (skin), Chakshus (eye), Jihva (tongue), Ghrana (nose). The five Karma-Indriyas or organs of action: Vak Speech), Pani (hand), Pada (foot), Upastha (genital), Payu (anus). The five Pranas or vital forces: Prana, Apana, Vyana, Udana, Samana. The fourfold Antahkarana or the internal organs: Manas (mind), Buddhi (intellect), Chitta (memory or subconscious), Ahamkara (egoism).

2. There are three Sariras or bodies: Sthula-Sarira (gross physical body), Sukshma or Linga-Sarira (subtle body), Karana-Sarira (causal body).

3. There are five Kosas or sheaths covering the Jiva: Annamaya (food sheath), Pranamaya (vital sheath), Manomaya (mental sheath), Vijnanamaya (intellectual sheath), Anandamaya (bliss-sheath).

4. There are six Bhava-Vikaras or modifications of the body: Asti (existence), Jayate (birth), Vardhate (growth), Viparinamate (change), Apakshiyate (decay), Vinasyati (death).

5. There are five gross elements: Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Ether (sky).

6. There are five Upa-Pranas or subsidiary vital airs: Naga, Kurma, Krikara, Devadatta, Dhananjaya.

7. There are six Urmis or waves (of the ocean of Samsara): Soka (grief), Moha (delusion), Kshut (hunger), Pipasa (thirst), Jara (decay or old age), Mrityu (death).

8. There are six Vairies or (passion), Krodha (anger), Lobha (greed), Moha enemies: Kama (infatuation or delusion), Mada (pride), Matsarya (jealousy).

9. Maya is twofold: Vidya (knowledge), Avidya (ignorance).

10. Vidya or knowledge is twofold: Para (higher), Apara (lower).

11. Avasthas or states of consciousness are three: Jagrat (waking), Svapna (dreaming), Sushupti (deep sleep).

12. Saktis are two: Avarana (veil), Vikshepa distraction).

13. Jnana-Bhumikas or degrees of knowledge are seven: Subhechha, Vicharana, Tanumanasi, Sattvapatti, Asamsakti, Padartha-Abhavana, Turiya.

14. Ajnana-Bhumikas or degrees of ignorance are seven: Aija-Jagrat, Jagrat, Maha-Jagrat, Jagrat-Svapna, Svapna, Svapna-Jagrat, Sushupti.

15. Sadhana is fourfold: Viveka (discrimination), Vairagya (dispassion), Shat-Sampad (six virtues), Mumukshutva (desire for liberation).

    The six virtues (Shat-Sampad) are: i. Sama (tranquillity of mind), ii. Dama (self-restraint or control of the senses), iii. Uparati (cessation from worldly activity), iv. Titiksha (forbearance or power of endurance), v. Sraddha (faith in God, Guru, Scripture and Self), vi.. Samadhana (concentration or one-pointedness of mind).

16. The nature of Atman or Brahman is threefold: Sat (Existence), Chit (Consciousness), Ananda (Bliss).

17. The Granthis or knots of the heart are three: Avidya (ignorance), Kama (desire), Karma (action).

18. The defects of the Jiva are three: Mala (impurity), Vikshepa (distraction), Avarana (veil of ignorance).

19. The Vrittis or modes of the mind are two: Vishayakara-Vritti (objective Brahmakara-Vritti (Infinite psychosis). Psychosis),

20. Gunas or qualities of Prakriti are three: Sattva (light and purity), Rajas (activity and passion), Tamas (darkness and inertia).

21. The Puris or cities constituting the subtle body are eight: Jnana-Indriyas, Karma-Indriyas, Pranas, Antahkarana, Tanmatras, Avidya, Kama, Karma.

22. Karmas are three: Sanchita, Prarabdha, Agami.

23. The nature of a thing is fivefold: Asti, Bhati, Priya, Nama, Rupa.

24. Bhedas or differences are three: Svagata, Svajatiya, Vijatiya.

25. Lakshanas or definitions of the nature of Brahman are two: Svarupalakshana, Tatasthalakshana

26. Dhatus or constituents of the body are seven: . Rasa (chyle), Asra (blood), Mamsa (flesh), Medas (fat), Asthi (bone), Majja (marrow), Sukla (semen).

27. There are four states of the Jnanis: Brahmavid, Brahmavidvara, Brahmavidvarishtha. Brahmavidvariyan,

28. Anubandhas or matters of discussion (themes) in Vedanta are four: Adhikari (fit aspirant), Vishaya (subject), Sambandha (connection), Prayojana (fruit or result).

29. Lingas or signs of a perfect exposition or a text are six: Upakrama-Upasamhara-Ekavakyata (unity of thought in the beginning as well as in the end), Abhyasa (reiteration repetition), Apurvata (novelty or or uncommon nature of the proof), Phala (fruit of the teaching), Arthavada (eulogy, praise or persuasive expression), Upapatti (illustration). Some say that Yukti or reason is the seventh sign.

30. Bhavanas or imaginations of the mind are three: Samsayabhavana (doubt), Asambhavana (feeling of impossibility), Viparitabhavana (perverted or wrong thinking).

31. Malas or impurities of the mind are thirteen: Raga, Dvesha, Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada, Maatsarya, Irshya, Asuya, Dambha, Darpa, Ahamkara.

32. Klesas or worldly afflictions are five: Avidya. (ignorance), Asmita (egoism), Raga (love), Dvesha (hatred), Abhinivesa (clinging to body and earthly life).

33. Taapas or sufferings are three: Adhidaivika, Adhibhautika, Adhyatmika.

34. Pramanas or proofs of knowledge are six Pratyaksha (perception), Upamana (comparison), Agama (scripture), Arthapatti Anumana (inference), (presumption), Anupalabdhi (non-apprehension).

35. Minds are two: Asuddha (impure), Suddha (Pure)

36. Meditations are two: Saguna, Nirguna.

37. Muktas are two: Jivanmukta, Videhamukta.

38. Muktis are two: Krama-Mukti, Sadyo-Mukti.

39. Samadhis are two: Savikalpa, Nirvikalpa.

40. Jnana is twofold: Paroksha (indirect), Aparoksha (direct).

41. Prakriti is twofold: Para, Apara.

42. Apara Prakriti is eightfold: Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Ether, Mind, Intellect, Egoism.

43. Prasthanas or the regulated texts of Vedanta are three: Upanishads (Sruti), Brahmasutras (Nyaya), Bhagavad-Gita (Smriti).

44. Eshanas or desires are three: Daraishana (desire for wife), Putraishana (desire for son), Vittaishana (desire for wealth).

45. Species of beings are four: Jarayuja (born of womb), Andaja (born of egg), Svedaja (born of sweat), Udbhijja (born of earth).

46. The sentinels to the door of salvation are four: Santi (peace), Santosha (contentment), Vichara (enquiry or ratiocination), Satsanga (company of the wise).

47. States of the mind are five: Kshipta (distracted), Mudha (dull), Vikshipta (slightly distracted), Ekagra (concentrated), Niruddha (inhibited).

48. Gates of the body are nine: Ears, eyes, mouth, nose, navel, genital, anus.

49. Avarana-Sakti is twofold: Asattva-Avarana, Abhana- Avarana.

50. Vikshepa-Sakti Ichhasakti, Jnanasakti. Is threefold: Kriyasakti,

51. Satta Paramarthika or existence is of three varieties: (absolutely real), Vyavaharika (phenomenal), Pratibhasika (apparent or illusory).

52. Knowledge is of two varieties: Svarupajnana (knowledge of (psychological the essential nature), Vrittijnana or intellectual knowledge).

53. Obstacles to Samadhi are four: Laya (torpidity), Vikshepa (distraction), Kashaya (attachment), Rasavada (egoistic enjoyment).

54. The nature of the cosmic (Samashti) person (Isvara) is threefold: Virat, Hiranyagarbha, Isvara.

55. The nature of the individual (Vyasmi) person (Jiva) is threefold: Visva, Taijasa, Prajna.

56. Cognition is effected through two factors: Vritti-Vyapti, Phala-Vyapti.

57. The meaning of the Tat Tvam Asi' Mahavakya is twofold: Vachyartha (literal meaning), Lakshyartha (indicative meaning).

58. Vedantic enquiry is practised through the methods of: Anvaya-Vyatireka, Atadvyavritti, Neti-neti doctrine, Adhyaropa-Apavada, Nyayas (illustrations), etc.

59. The meaning of the great dictum Tat Tvam Asi' is ascertained through the considerations of Jahadajahallakshana, Bhagatyagalakshana, Samana- dhikaranya, Viseshana-viseshyabhava, Lakshya- lakshanasamhandha.

60. The important Vadas in Vedanta Vivartavada, Parinamavada, Drishti-Srishtivada, Avachhedavada, Anekajivavada, Abhasavada, Satkaryavada. Are: Ajatavada, Ekajivavada,

61. Vedantic contemplation is fourfold-Sravana, Manana, Nididhyasana, Sakshatkara. Om Shanti Shanti Shantih!

Chapter VIII

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS IN VEDANTA

1. What is Anubandha-chatushtaya?

This is the fourfold theme of Vedanta Philosophy. The first is the discussion about the Adhikari or the fit student of Vedanta. The student should have the necessary qualifications of the Sadhana-chatushtaya. The second is the discussion regarding the Vishaya or the main subject of the Vedanta. The Subject treated of is Brahman or the Absolute. The third theme is Sambandha or the relation that exists between the subject-matter and the text, i.e., the coherent exposition of the subject. The fourth is Phala or the fruit of the study of Vedanta. The fruit hereof is Moksha or Liberation.

2. In what way Karma and Upasana prepare the aspirant for Vedanta?

Karma is performance of one's own prescribed duty without the desire for any fruit therefrom. This removes the Mala or the impurity that is in the mind. Upasana is worship and contemplation of Saguna Brahman. This removes the Vikshepa or the tossing or the distraction present in the mind. Only after removing these two defects can one take up the study of the Vedanta in order to remove the last defect, viz., Avarana or veil of ignorance.

3. Give the best definition of Brahman and explain its meaning.

The best definition of the nature of Brahman is 'Satchidananda'. Sat is eternal existence. Chit is eternal and infinite consciousness. Ananda is eternal bliss. This existence, consciousness and bliss are really one and indicate the transcendental character of the Absolute.

4. What is the difference between Maya and Avidya?

Maya is the cause, whereas Avidya is the effect Maya qualifies Isvara but does not limit him. Maya is the Viseshana and not the constituent of Isvara's existence. But Avidya is an Upadhi, a limitation, which enters into the very constitution of the Jiva. Maya is Suddha Sattva, Avidya is Malina Sattva or Sattva mixed with Rajas and Tamas. Maya is cosmic, Avidya is individual. Maya allows cosmic consciousness in Isvara. But Avidya limita the Jiva to body-consciousness.

5. What is the Vairagya?

True Vairagya is born of discrimination and not of mere failure in life. Real dispassion is the effect of the perception of the impermanence of things, the falsity of the existence of happiness in objects, the knowledge of the distinction between reality and appearance. This Vairagya goes even up to Brahma-Loka, the highest phenomenal manifestation, and discards it as a dry straw. In other words. Vairagya is distaste for everything that is objective.

6. What is Jahad-Ajahad-Lakshana? How is it applied in Vedanta?

This literally means 'leaving and taking'. For example, in a statement like This is that Devadatta', the words 'this' and 'that', though in fact signify immediate and remote objects respectively, are known to indicate one common person Devadatta. The differences denoted by the two adjectives are rejected in

order to identify the single person called Devadatta. This illustration is applied in Vedanta to identify the essential meanings of the words Tvam' and Tat' in the declaration of the Upanishad Tat Tvam Asi'. The limitations characteristic of the Jiva and Isvara are discarded and the underlying substratum, namely, the one consciousness which is unlimited is taken up as the sole reality.

7. What is Sravana-chatushtya?

This is the fourfold process of Self-realisation, beginning with Sravana or hearing of the Vedantic Truth from the Guru, Manana or deep thinking and reflection over what is heard, Nididhyasana or profound meditation on the Self, and ending with Sakshatkara or realisation.

8. Explain the theory of the evolution of the universe.

There is an indescribable power in Brahman called Mula-Prakriti. This consists of three Gunas or modes called Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Originally it is in Samya-Avastha or the state of equilibrium. It divides itself into Maya, Avidya and Tamasi through the three modes respectively. Maya gives rise Isvara, to Hiranyagarbha and Virat. Avidya gives rise to the individual Jivas. Tamasi divides itself into Avarana and Vikshepa. Avarana is twofold; viz., Asattva Avarana and Abhana Avarana. The Vikshepa Sakti gives rise to the five Tanmatras, viz., Sabda, Sparsa, Rupa, Rasa and Gandha. The Antahkarana is formed of the collective totality of the Sattva portion of these Tanmatras. The Prana is made up of the collective totality of the Rajasic portion of these Tanmatras. The Jnana Indriyas and the Karma Indriyas are respectively formed of the Sattvic and the Rajasic portions of these Tanmatras differently. The five gross elements, viz., sky, air, fire, water and earth are the effects of the quintuplication of the Tamasic portion of these Tanmatras. Thus is the creation of the universe.

9. What is Duhkha Parampara?

This is the genealogy of pain. The original cause of all trouble is Ajnana or ignorance. From Ajnana comes Aviveka or non-discrimination. From Aviveka comes Ahamkara or egoism. From Ahamkara arises Raga-Dvesha or love and hatred towards objects. Raga and Dvesha beget Karma or action guided by its parents. Karma causes Janma or birth and from birth as an embodied being arises pain. Hence the cause must be destroyed in order to destroy the effect.

10. Why is not pain the essential nature of the Atman?

The essential nature of a thing is called Svabhava Its existence is called Svarupa. We cannot separate Svabhava from Svarupa. If pain is the Svabhava of the Self, destruction of pain would mean the destruction of Svabhava itself, i.e., the destruction of the Atman or the Self. To destroy the sweetness of sugar, the sugar itself has to be destroyed. Because destruction of the Atman is an absurd idea, and because destruction of pain is the only purpose of all endeavours, pain cannot be the essential nature of the Atman.

11. Prove that Sat, Chit and Ananda are one and that they indicate infinity.

Sat is existence. Existence has a value only when it is conscious, for consciousness can never be separated from existence as we see from our own experience. Since pain is the effect of a want, and since want is absent in Brahman because of its secondlessness, bliss must be the nature of Brahman. To put it concisely, consciousness which is bliss exists. Satchidananda indicates infinity, because everything that is finite is perishable. Because Satchidananda is imperishable, it must be infinite.

12. Show that Atman is different from the three states.

In the dreaming state the waking state is not experienced. Yet, one feels his existence in dream. Hence waking state is different from the Self. In the deep sleep state dream is not experienced. Yet the Self does exist in deep sleep as testified by the remembrance of the nature of sleep later on. Hence, the Self is different from the dreaming condition. In sleep there is the awareness of the absence of everything. Nothingness is the object of the sleep-consciousness. This sleep-consciousness is proves unlimited. That consciousness must be objectless Self-Consciousness. Since such an absolute consciousness exists, and since the Unlimited awareness of existence is antagonistic to ignorance, the ignorance experienced in sleep cannot be the Atman. Further, in Samadhi, the Self is experienced as different from the sleeping state.

13. In what way knowledge of Brahman is different from ordinary knowledge?

In ordinary knowledge there is the knowledge of something which is different from the knower. Hence this knowledge is not unlimited and therefore perishable. But knowledge of Brahman is eternal knowledge, which means the union of the knower and the known. This is called infinite knowledge, knowledge, not of something, but pure knowledge merely without an object of knowledge.

14. Why Brahma-Jnana alone can bring about Moksha and there is no other way?

Moksha is the realisation of the existence of unlimited bliss. Anything short of the realisation of absoluteness is not Moksha. There is no other way of attaining this state than knowledge. Absoluteness cannot be achieved through individualistic striving and no kind of relationship can be developed with the Absolute, because every relation limits absoluteness. Hence the only way is knowledge of this eternal Fact, simple awareness, and not any other way, because it goes against absoluteness.

15. What are Adhyaropa and Apavada?

Adhyaropa is the superimposition of something unreal on something real. In Vedanta it is the superimposition of the world on Brahman. Apavada is the refutation of this ignorant notion through Vichara or self-analysis and introspection based on Viveka or right discrimination between the Real Brahman and the unreal appearance of the universe.

16. What are (i) Paramarthika, (ii) Vyavaharika and (iii) Pratibhasika Sattas?

Paramarthika Satta is absolute reality. From the human standpoint the deep sleep state is Paramarthika Satta. Really this is the Turiya or the Atman. This state may be compared to the ocean. Vyavaharika Satta is relative reality or the world experienced in the waking condition. This state may be compared to the wave of an ocean. Pratibhasika Satta is apparent or illusory reality or the experience of the dreaming state. This may be compared to the foam arising from the wave of the ocean. Just as the foam is based on the wave and the wave on the ocean and the coolness of the ocean is seen in the wave and the foam also, the Paramarthika Satta is the basis of the other two and the nature of Satchidananda which belongs to this is seen in the other two also.

17. What are (i) Samsayabhavana, (ii) Asambhavana and (iii) Viparitabhavana?

Samsayabhavana is the doubt whether the Atman described in the different sections of the Sruti is one or different. Asambhavana is the notion of impossibility of the unreality of Jiva, Isvara and Jagat in the

face of their clearly perceived difference. Viparitabhavana is the persistent idea that the world is real in spite of hearing the meaning of various arguments against it. These three defects are removed through Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana

18. What are Shad Lingas?

These are the six methods of ascertaining the meaning of a text. They are (i) Upakrama-Upasamhara Ekavakyata or the unity between the ideas expounded in the beginning and the end, (ii) Abhyasa or repetition of an idea several times, (iii) Apurvata or the uncommon nature of the subject treated of, i.e., uniqueness of the subject, (iv) Arthavada or glorification of the fruit of the study and practice of what is expounded; (v) Upapatti or illustration or reasoning; and (vi) Phala or the fruit of the treatment.

19. What are (i) Purusha Tantra and (ii) Vastu Tantra? Explain these with reference to Vedanta.

Purusha Tantra is dependent on the subject of action. To see God or only stone in the image in a temple is left to the will of the person concerned. Hence the called Purusha Tantra as it is based on the will of the subject. To see one moon or two moons is not left to the subject, because one cannot see two moons and proclaim that there are two moons simply because it is his will. Moon is one, though someone may wish that it must be two. Hence this is called Vastu Tantra as it is dependent on the object itself and not on the percipient. Knowledge of Brahman is Vastu Tantra because Brahman should be known as it really is and not as one likes. All other methods like Yoga and Upasana are Purusha Tantra because they are dependent on the caprice of the individual. Only Brahma-Jnana is free from such capriciousness.

20. Why Karma is not antagonistic to Avidya?

Avidya is ignorance of Non-Duality and perception of duality. Karma is not possible without the perception of duality and hence it is not against Avidya.

21. Why Svarupa-Jnana cannot remove ignorance? How, then, is ignorance destroyed?

Svarupa-Jnana is indivisible indifferent consciousness. It is not concerned with either the existence or the nonexistence of ignorance. There is Svarupa-Jnana in deep sleep, but the destruction of ignorance is not effected in this state. Removal of ignorance is possible only by an active consciousness by raising the Brahmakara Vritti and hence only the waking state is useful for this purpose. The waking consciousness may itself be unreal when compared with the Absolute Consciousness, but to remove an unreal ignorance this unreal consciousness is sufficient.

22. What are (i) Krama Srishti and (ii) Yugapat Srishti?

Krama Srishti is the progressive creation of the universe (Vide No. 8). Yugapat-Srishti is the sudden or simultaneous appearance of the universe. The former theory is expounded only for the sake of the ignorant people who cannot understand that the whole universe is an absolute unreality based sheerly on the ignorance of the true existence of the one undivided reality. The latter theory holds that there is no creation at all in reality, that the appearance of the universe is an absurdity like the teeth of a crow, and that the moment ignorance is destroyed by the assertion of the nature of Brahman everywhere the whole universe will shine as the one Brahman.

23. Prove that the Self exists in past, present and future.

The present body has come from previous action. And this previous action could not have been done by the present body since this body is the effect of that action. Hence a previous body must have existed. This same Self must have performed that action previously through another body, for one cannot experience the effects of some other's action. That previous body must have come out of some other previous action done through some other body still and thus ad infinitum. Hence the Self must have existed since eternity. The present actions will give rise to a future body. And this future effect is to be experienced by this very Self. The actions performed by the future body must again be experienced in a further future. Thus the Self exists in the infinite future also. Hence the Self exists in past, present and future.

24. What are the seven Jnana Bhumikas?

Subhechha or wishing to become good, Vicharana or the state of enquiry, Tanumanasi or the condition of the thinness of the mind, Sattvapatti or the attainment of the light and purity of Sattva, Asamasakti or the complete detachment from every object, Padartha-Abhavana or the non-perception of materiality in things, i.e. perception of the spirit or the essence of things, Turiya or the last state of Jivanmukti where the individual realises the Absolute, are the seven states of Jnana.

25. What are (i) Pramana Grantha and (ii) Prameya Grantha?

Pramana Grantha is a text book which deals with the proofs of knowledge. It mainly consists of logic and argumentation. Examples are Khandana-khanda-khadya and Advaita Siddhi. Prameya Grantha is a textbook which deals with the object of knowledge, viz., God, Brahman or Atman. Examples are the Upanishads and the Bhagavadgita.

26. What are (i) Vritti Vyapti and (ii) Phala Vyapti?

Vritti Vyapti is the pervasion of the psychosis or the mental modification over an object in the process of the perception of something external. Phala Vyapti is the pervasion of the effect of the consciousness of the Self which follows the Vritti in the process of perception. In the case of internal cognitions, i.e., awareness of the mental modifications, Vritti Vyapti takes the form of remembrance or inference, because here no perception of an external object is necessary. In the case of Brahma-Jnana, however, there is no Phala-Vyapti, because Brahman does not require another light to illumine itself.

27. Explain Asti, Bhati, Priya, Nama, Rupa.

Asti, Bhati and Priya are the characteristics of the Self which exists, shines and is dear. This is the same as Satchidananda. These are eternal characteristics which belong to Infinite Being. But Nama and Rupa are name and form which are only apparent and are the characteristics of the world which is perishable.

28. What is Avachheda Vada? What is Pratibimba Vada?

Avachheda Vada is the theory of division or the doctrine of limitation. It holds that the Jivas are parts or limited portions of Isvara. According to this theory it would mean that all the miserable experiences of the Jivas also must exist in Isvara in a collective form. Hence the theory of Pratibimba or reflection was developed which says that the Jivas are reflections of Isvara in the lakes of the minds, and hence the pains of the Jivas cannot affect since a reflection affects the original.

29. What is the nature of Moksha?

Moksha is Atyantika-Duhkha-Nivritti or absolute cessation of pain and Paramananda-Prapti or attainment of supreme bliss.

30. Quote four declarations of the Upanishads regarding the fruit of Vedantic Nididhyasana.

“Brahmavid Apnoti Param-The knower of Brahman attains the Highest. “Brahmavid Brahmaive Bhavati-The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman Itself. “Tarati Sokam Atmavid-The knower of the Self crosses over sorrow. “Brahma-samastho Amritatvameti- one who is established in Brahman attains Immortality.

Om Tat Sat!

Chapter IX

THE SIX KHYATIS

THEORIES OF ERROR IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

Introduction

An understanding of the characteristics of our judgments of truth and error forms an integral part of philosophical knowledge. This understanding is necessary for the discovery of the deeper implications of experience. Knowledge, ordinarily, presupposes a subject of knowledge and an object corresponding to it. The nature of this knowledge is dependent upon the mind and the cognitive organs of the knowing subject, as well as on the conditions in which the object is situated in relation to the subject. The knowledge of colour through eyes which are affected with jaundice may be incorrect, since there is every possibility of its being the perception of an apparently objective yellow colour, though what is really objective may be of some other colour. In the same manner, a distant object may be mistaken for something else, though the organs of perception may be in a healthy condition and this error may be caused by a peculiar relation obtaining between the percipient and the position of the object. Our perceptions of things greatly influence what we infer and decide, which means that our whole life is judged by us in accordance with the modes of our perception and the knowledge based on them. As every inference is based on previous perception, erroneous perception will nullify the value of the inferences built upon it.

Different theories of error in accordance with their The different schools of philosophy have advanced avowed theories of knowledge. These theories concerning the nature of erroneous cognition are technically called “Khyatis.” There are six important Khyatis in Indian

Philosophy, They are: 1. Satkhyati, 2. Akhyati, 3. Anyathakhyati, 4. Atmakhyati, 5. Asatkhyati and 6. Anirvachinayakhyati.

The theory of Satkhyati is held by Ramanuja and his followers. According to this theory, there is no error in fact. What is experienced is real. Satkhyati, Akhyati and Anyathakhyati may be brought under the general head. Satkhyati, which is in opposition to Asatkhyati. The general theory of Satkhyati advocates the view that in wrong knowledge there is cognition of some kind of reality or existence. In a sense, even Atmakhyati may come under Satkhyati, for it admits the reality of cognition within. The theory of Asatkhyati is advanced by the Madhyamikas or Sunyavadins, who hold that in wrong knowledge there is cognition of unreality or non-existence. The Anirvachaniyakhyati is the view of the Advaitin, that experienced objects are indeterminable and that the object of erroneous cognition is neither real, nor unreal, nor real-unreal, i.e., it is Sadasadvilakshana. Atmakhyati is the theory of the Vijnanavadins, the Vaibhasikas and the Sautrantikas, having different theories of perception that the internal concept appears as the external percept, in erroneous cognition. Akhyati is the theory of the Sankhya, Yoga and the Prabhakara school of Purva-Mimamsa, according to which, in error, there is non-distinction between a memory-image and a percept. Anyathakyati is the view of the Nyaya, Vaiseshika and Kumarila Bhatta’s

school of Purva-Mimamsa, and this holds that the substratum and the percept of erroneous cognition are real independently.

A discussion of these several theories is an essential part of Indian epistemology.

Satkhyati

Statement: According to Satkhyati, all objects exist independent of the knowledge which others have of them. The nonexistent cannot be perceived. Truth is the correspondence between knowledge and an object which has independent existence. The erroneous cognition of silver in nacre is not really the cognition of something unreal as such, for it refers to something which exists. The elements of silver that are contained in nacre are responsible for the perception of silver in nacre, though these elements require the aid of a peculiar constitution of the perceiving sense-organs. Though erroneous judgment may be due to defective sense-organs, the absolutely nonexistent cannot be perceived at any time. As, by the process of quintuplication, every element contains parts of other elements, it is possible that anything can contain any other thing. Even the perception of yellow colour in things by a person affected with jaundice is not the perception of some colour which is really not in objects, but of what all objects possess in some degree, though this cannot be perceived by all eyes. The eye which is affected with jaundice, being favourably conditioned, can see it. Hence, the distinction which is ordinarily made between truth and error does not really exist. But, in order that truth may be practically useful in life, it should correspond not merely to some existent thing, in some degree, but to the element which is preponderating others in that object which is perceived. Hence, only these elements which, being commonly predominant in things, are equally perceived by all others also, alone can be really useful in life. When something is perceived only by one individual, privately, and not by others, it becomes the so-called unreal or the illusory. But even the content of this private perception by an individual has existence, though it cannot be seen by others. What is called correction of error is not the negation of what is existent, but only the cessation of effort in regard to the non-predominant element in the object.

Refutation: In quintuplication, the gross physical elements are not quintuplicated; only the subtle rudimentary principles of these elements are quintuplicated. Else, one would perceive silver in a stone-pillar. The constituents of nacre and silver are not mixed up in one object. If silver is really contained in nacre, the silver part of the nacre should melt when the nacre is thrown into fire. A snake is not present in the rope as one of the constituents of the latter.

Akhyati

Statement: The theory of Akhyati holds that the inability to discriminate (Aviveka) between cognitions of different kinds and between their corresponding objects is error. Error is not the perception of something existent, but the non-perception of difference between different cognitions of different characteristics and contents. The two cognitions are real independently, without reference to each other. In the perception of silver in nacre, the perception of ‘Idamta’ or ‘this-ness’ is true perception, but the vision of the silver is only a memory of what was previously perceived. The non-perception of the difference between the two real distincts is due to some defect in sense-perception. Perception and memory, the object of perception and the object of memory, are different from one another. But this difference is not perceived in erroneous perception. Memory is mistaken for perception. As there is this

inherent mistake in perception, this perception does not lead successful activity corresponding to the to perception. Correction of error is the subsequent consciousness of the distinction between what is perceived (e.g., nacre) and what is merely remembered (e.g., silver). But in correction there is no cancellation of either nacre or silver; only their distinction and the distinction of perception and memory are recognised. In perception through a jaundiced eye the distinction between the yellowness of the bile and the real colour of the object perceived is not seen. Really speaking, there is no such thing as real error. The so-called error is only absence of the true relation between the two elements in knowledge. But the contents of knowledge are never unreal or false. Truth may not be known fully, but there cannot be, strictly speaking, knowledge of untruth or falsehood.

Refutation: The Purvapakshin admits that the perception of an object implies the perception of the difference of that object from another object. There is the negation of cloth in a pot, and vice versa and without this negation being implied in the perception of a cloth or a pot, neither of these can be perceived. And the perception of distinction is the same as that of reciprocal relationship among objects. Distinction is the essential nature of every object. Without the perception of distinction there is no perception at all. Hence, it is not true that the distinction between nacre and silver is not cognised, though the two objects are cognised in perception and memory respectively. As knowledge is accepted to be self-luminous, the moment it is manifest, it should reveal difference. And when any object is known, its distinction from other objects should also be known simultaneously. Thus, the possibility of the non-cognition of difference does not arise.

Further, it is not true that the non-discrimination between percept and memory obtains in all forms of experience. In dream when, really, all experience is only a memory except that of the Self which alone is known directly, a distinction between this direct experience and memory is made; else, there would not be perception of dream-objects. If the object seen in dream as memory-image is non-distinguished a from direct experience, one would have the knowledge: “I am the object,” and not “this is the object.” It cannot also be said that two memory-images are non-distinguished in error, for, in that case, there would be no experience of error.

Anyathakhyati

Statement: According to Anyathakhyati, error is not the non-distinction between a percept and a memory or between their contents. The silver that is not seen in nacre is not a mere memory. A memory-image cannot be directly perceived. But it is true that the silver that is seen in nacre is not really where it is seen. If the silver seen in nacre is absolutely unreal, there would be no perception of silver at all. An absolutely non-existent entity cannot be perceived as existent. But it is also true that the silver in question is not really present in the nacre. This is proved by the failure of this silver to conform to practical workability. Error is the cognition of a composite situation brought about by a kind of subsistence of ‘silverness’ in the ‘this-ness’ (Idamta) in the cognition.

The fact is that nacre, in erroneous perception, is not perceived as it is. It is not the character of nacre but the this-ness’ of nacre with a character of glittering that is perceived in erroneous perception. A memory of silver arises in the mind of the perceiver when the character of glittering which is attributed to silver is perceived. Now, what is perceived erroneously is neither nacre fully nor silver really, but the ‘this-ness’ of nacre with the quality of ‘silverness’ attributed to the fact of glittering. So, what is perceived is not merely a memory of silver, but the silver existing somewhere else brought into relation

with the perceiving eye by the memory arisen in the mind. Really, it is a relation that is there, but it gets identified with actual perception on account of memory. Though the relation between the 'this-ness' and the eye is ordinary, the relation between the silver and the eye is extraordinary, and not natural. But some kind of relation is obtained between two things in erroneous cognition. Though nacre is not silver, it appears to the eyes as silver, through the extraordinary relation mentioned above.

In erroneous cognition two factors are involved one that is 'there' and the other that is 'not there', observed by the eye through the 'natural' and the 'non-natural' relations of the contents with the eye. In the correction of error, what is negated is not silver itself, but the supposed relation between the 'this-ness' and the silver. What is negated is not a non-existent silver, for the non-existent cannot be seen. The silver must exist somewhere. And it must he somewhere else, for its negation is experienced in correction of error.

Refutation: In erroneous cognition silver does not appear as a distant object, but is identified with something which is existent before the eyes. The existence of silver somewhere else has no bearing on the silver that is perceived in nacre. The so-called actual perception of silver in erroneous judgment is only of an appearance of silver in nacre and for this a really existent silver is unnecessary. Moreover, when the error is corrected, one feels: "this is not silver", and not "there is no relation between the 'this-ness' of this nacre and the distant silver". What is cancelled in correction is the silver perceived there and not merely a relation of silver with 'this-ness'. And a relation which is unreal cannot, according to the Anyathakhyativadin himself, be negated; and if it is real, it cannot, again, be negated. And further, the admission of extraordinary perception makes inference useless, for the process of extraordinary perception can be applied to inference, and vice versa.

Atmakhyati

Statement. According to this theory, the silver perceived in nacre is not silver really existing somewhere outside. This silver is real as an object of internal cognition, but unreal as an object of external perception. It is not absolutely non-existent, for it is perceived. It has subjective existence and objective non-existence. This silver is an object of the mind and not of the senses. It is ideal and not real, psychological and not physical; and error is the projecting outward, as a material object, of the internal mental concept which is non-material. In error, the mental is mistaken for the material. In the correction of error, it is not the silver that is negatived, but only its apparent externality of being. In correct perception (i.e, of nacre after removal of error), the silver is recognised and the Sautrantikas accept that there is an externally real basis, the 'this', the former holding that this basis is as an internal concept. The Vaibhashikas directly perceived and the latter that it is only inferred. But both these admit that the silver perceived in nacre is projected from within on the external substratum, whether this substratum is perceived or inferred. The Vijnanavadins hold that there is nothing externally real, and the cognised object is only cognition externalised by error. They hold that there is non-distinction, at the cognition, between cognition and the cognised, which proves that the cognised is cognition itself.

Refutation: That the cognised and the cognition are non-distinct is not a fact. Cognition of the cognised and the existence of the cognised at the time of cognition naturally appear to be simultaneous; but simultaneity is not identity. The manifestation of light and the revelation of an object with its aid are simultaneous events; but the light and the object are not identical with one another. The cognitive consciousness cannot be said to be the same as the cognised object. How can something appear outside

when there is nothing outside? There cannot be an appearance without some reality underlying it. We can have changing cognitions of the same object and also more than one object can be cognised by the same cognitive consciousness. This proves that objects outside are not mere internal cognitions. Objects exist prior to perception of the same; objects are in space outside, while the cognitive consciousness is within. There is thus a temporal and spatial distinction between cognition and its objects. And further, there would be no distinction between truth and error, if all objects are merely mental. Something independent of cognition is to be admitted if truth is to be distinguished from error. Without this independent existence, there cannot perception of things by all alike, and thus there would be be common no such thing as truth other than private fancy. But common perception disproves the Vijnanavada position of the ideality of external things.

Asatkhyati

Statement. This theory holds that what is cognised in erroneous cognition is absolutely non-existent. If the silver perceived in nacre were real, it could not be sublated afterwards on correct perception. As silver seen in erroneous perception is not seen in correct perception, it is clear that the silver of erroneous perception does not really exist. Due to the power of Avidya or ignorance, cognition manifests a non-existent silver. The impression of the previous perception of silver becomes responsible for the perception of an appearance of silver in erroneous judgment. As correction of error reveals the non-existence of silver in nacre, we have to conclude that Sunya or the non-existent is the object of erroneous cognition.

Refutation: Avidya cannot create the non-existent silver, for the non-existent cannot be created at any time. If the unreal does not even appear, it is not possible even to say that the unreal does not appear, as one cannot say: “My mother is barren.” Further, cognition, which is the substratum of Avidya, cannot be caused by Avidya to manifest an unreal object. The cause cannot be directed or influenced by the effect. Hence, cognition possessing the power of Avidya cannot produce the non-existent silver in nacre. And, moreover, no kind of relation can be established between cognition and silver, for there can be no relation between the existent and the non-existent. Without a relation between the cognition and the object cognised, no cognition is possible. What is cognised in erroneous cognition is not the non-existent, and not also the truly existent, but only an appearance or Pratibhasikasatta which is devoid of Vyavaharikasatta or practical reality and value. The illusion of Vyavaharikata in Pratibhasikata is cancelled in correction of error, but it is not true that even Pratibhasikata is absent in erroneous cognition. The Pratibhasikasatta appears as an external object, and not merely as a notion or an idea within. Objective reality is of two kinds—Vyavaharika and Pratibhasika. The latter is called the unreal in practical life. Mistaking this latter for the former is error. Error is corrected when the objective basis (Vyavaharikasatta) of the appearance (Pratibhasika- Batta) is discovered in one’s cognitive consciousness.

Anirvachaniya Khyati

The Anirvachaniya Khyati which is the theory of the Advaitin is the logical conclusion arrived at through a criticism of the various other views on error. The silver seen in nacre is neither real, nor a memory, nor existent somewhere else, nor an internal idea, nor absolutely non-existent like a human horn. This silver is not different from the real alone, not different from the unreal alone, and not different from both the

real and the unreal alone. One cannot definitely describe the nature of the silver perceived in nacre. It is not real, for it is sublated. It is not unreal, for it is perceived. It is not both real and unreal, for this is self-contradictory. Hence the silver in nacre is Anirvachaniya, indeterminable. Objects which have Pratibhasikasatta have the characteristics of indeterminability mentioned above, and they are Anirvachaniya. The indeterminability of appearances like this, which do not conform to the laws of empirical action, is of one kind and can be said to constitute empirical error; and the indeterminability of the objects of correct perception in waking life is of a different kind altogether, and can be said to constitute transcendental error. This latter can be understood only through reason, scripture and direct realisation. The indeterminability of the nature of the world of waking life is explained by the admission in life of a distinction between empirical reality (Vyavaharikasatta) and Absolute (Paramarthikasatta). With reference to Vyavaharika- satta, Pratibhasikasatta is Anirvachaniya, and with Reality reference to Parmarthikasatta, Vyavaharikasatta is Anirvachaniya. It is quite obvious that anything which cannot be called either real or unreal or real-unreal must be called indeterminable, Anirvachaniya.

The Anirvachaniya character of silver perceived in nacre can be established by the proof of Arthapatti, i.e., Presumption or implication. The silver in question, as it has been shown above, is not real. It is not unreal. And it is not also real-unreal. So it ought to be indeterminable. This is the process of Arthapatti. What other relation than Anirvachaniyatva can obtain between reality and appearance? Yet, this Anirvachaniyasatta has an objective basis. In the case of empirical erroneous cognition, e.g., the cognition of silver in nacre, this basis is nacre. In transcendental erroneous cognition, i.e., the cognition of the universe in Brahman, the basis is Brahman. The object of cognition in empirical erroneous cognition is cognised due to a psychological error; and the basis for this cognised object is a physical object which is empirically real. And the object of cognition in transcendental erroneous cognition is cognised due to a metaphysical error; and the basis for this cognised object is the Absolute-Consciousness which is transcenden- tally, absolutely real.

The unreality of the silver in nacre is different from the unreality of such things as a man's horn. The latter cannot be perceived, for it is never manifest in experience; the former is perceived, and it has some sort of objective existence. It has Pratibhasikasatta which man's horn does not have. But this Pratibhasikasatta has no Vyavaharikasatta, and so it is negatived in correct perception, i.e., in the perception of nacre as such. Silver in nacre is an Anirvachaniyavastu. Even the nacre as such does not have Paramarthikasatta, and so it, too, gets negatived in the realisation of Brahman. Nacre as such, also, is an Anirvachaniyavastu. The Anirvachaniya is not the absolute non-existent, but the indefinable empirical and apparent. The empirical belongs to Isvarasrishti and is the product of Maya, while the apparent belongs to Jivasrishti and is produced by Avidya.

The theories of Drishtisrishti (creation on perceiving) and Srishtidrishti (perception on creating) pertain to Pratibhasika and Vyavaharika objects in two different levels of perception. The silver perceived in nacre is Drishtisrishti for it exists only so long as it is seen, and it is created by perception caused by individual Avidya. But the nacre as such exists whether it is perceived by an individual or not. Hence it is independent of Drishtisrishti. As its perception is posterior to its existence, it is a case of Srishtidrishti. But this nacre is the product of the Drishti of Isvara through the cosmic Maya. And nacre cannot exist when Isvaradrishti is withdrawn; it exists only so long as Isvaradrishti exists. Thus the Vyavaharikasatta is Drishtisrishti from Isvara's standpoint, though it is the basis of Srishtidrishti from Jiva's standpoint. The Pratibhasikasatta is purely Drishtisrishti even from the standpoint of the Jiva. When nacre is seen, the

silver vanishes. When Brahman is realised, the universe vanishes. When reality is known, the appearances superimposed on it vanish.

The fact that in the negation of error the silver perceived in nacre is found to be absolutely non-existent, does not prove that the silver at the time of its being perceived was absolutely non-existent. As it has been already said, the absolutely non-existent cannot manifest before the perceptive consciousness. The perceptions of dream are found to be absolutely non-existent during the waking state; but this does not prove that dream-objects are absolutely non-existent, for they were experienced during dream. The Vedanta makes a distinction, therefore, between Pratibhasikasatta and Vyavaharikasatta. Silver in nacre and dream-objects belong to the former category; nacre and all the objects of the universe belong to the latter.

Thus it is established that the silver appearing in nacre is Anirvachaniya. Otherwise the perception and sublation of one and the same thing cannot be explained. In the same way it is to be understood that the universe superimposed on Brahman is Anirvachaniya, Maya and Avidya are both Anirvachaniya, and what they manifest also should be regarded as Anirvachaniya.

Chapter X

VEDANTA IN DAILY LIFE

Introduction

Vedanta is the science and the art of living one's life at its highest and the best. It is the system of the perfect life, the rule of wisdom and the law of liberty. Vedanta is not merely a conceptual system or a speculation over what ought to be', but the factual knowledge of what is'. The western philosophers were and are busy with ascertaining what 'ought to be'; but the ancient Hindus have already discovered, realised and proclaimed the truth of what 'is'. Vedanta is the result of this discovery of the Absolute Truth, the declaration of the nature of the Supreme Goal of life and the way thereto. Hence, Vedanta is the very meaning of life, the very fact of one's being; it is not merely a philosophical system to be reserved for intellectual pleasantry during leisure hours. It is the food of the higher understanding which fixes itself up in the verity of the Real Self. Vedanta is as simple as life; and it is also as complex as life is.

Even a child can be taught Vedanta, provided the teacher knows very well what Vedanta truly means, and how it can be applied to the different stages of life. It is ignorance and wrong understanding that make people think that otherworldly theory concerning merely a life which Vedanta is an out-of-the-way and follows death. Certainly Vedanta is not such a narrow theory estranged from the fact of everyday life. Vedanta Without it life would mean only groping in darkness. can and must be applied in the daily life of everyone. What is man, after all if not a thought, or a group of thoughts? And Vedanta is the light which illumines the world of thought, of understanding. One can very well Imagine from this the importance of the Vedanta.

Vedanta does not say that one should detest the world or isolate oneself in some world other than this. It does not proclaim that anyone should forsake his duties or put on castor-oil face or behave in an intolerable manner. Vedanta says that one should not be selfish or attached to any fleeting object, that one should live in the consciousness of the loving brotherhood and unity and of the Selfhood or Atmahood of the universe, that the Truth of existence is One and indivisible, that division or separation, hatred, enmity, quarrel and selfishness are against the Eternal Truth, that the pain of birth and death is caused by desire generated by ignorance of this great Truth, that the highest state of experience or perfection is Immortal Life or the realisation of Brahman, that everyone is born for this one supreme purpose, that all other duties are only aids or auxiliaries to this great Duty of Self-realisation, that one should perform one's prescribed duties in life with the spirit of non-attachment and of dedication to the Supreme Being, that every aspect of one's life should get consummated in this Supreme Consciousness. It is not a question of abandoning something or holding on to something, but of a change in the Drishti or the vision of life. It is a change in the way of the function of the conceptual and the perceptual consciousness that is required by the Vedanta. The body will be there; its activities will be there; but these will be transformed into the lustrous gold of the liberated life (Jivanmukti) by the touch of the philosopher's stone of the knowledge of the Self. This life of Self-knowledge is life at its

highest and the best. This is the most blessed state, the state of Freedom or Moksha. This is what everyone should aspire after. The way to this state of realisation is Vedanta-Sadhana.

Aspirants! Vedanta is the bread of your life. Assimilate it. Study these admonitive passages and know their spirit. Live up to it, and enjoy the freedom of the spiritual consciousness.

What Is Vedanta?

Vedanta is the end of the Vedas.
It is the realisation of oneness.
It speaks of unity.
It proclaims:
"You are not this perishable body; But you are the all-pervading, Immortal Soul- Tat Tvam Asi', Thou art That

Vedanta Solves All Problems

Vedanta alone can solve all problems.
Understanding and practice of Vedanta alone
Can stop all wars
And bring peace in this world.
Vedanta will remove all barriers.
Vedanta will melt all differences.
Vedanta will unite all.
Vedanta will remove petty-mindedness,
Crookedness, jealousy, selfishness,
Greed, hatred, suspicion and cruelty.
Vedanta ennobles, lifts and inspires.

Vedanta for Health

The Atman is Anaamaya, diseaseless.
It is All-Health, All-Joy, All-Bliss.
Meditation on the Atman gives wonderful health
And eradicates all diseases.
It is the best panacea and tonic.
Meditate on the formula:
"I am the diseaseless, immortal Soul."
Incurable diseases are cured
By Vedantic Meditation.

Vedanta for World-peace

No piece of paper called a treaty
Will ever heal the world of war.

Individual peace paves
For world-peace.
The radical cure for war
Is to find the Inner Peace first
Through Self-realisation
And Vedantic Meditation.
If one realises the unity and the oneness,
How can there be war?
Who is to wage war with whom?

Vedantin's Brahman

Vedantin's Brahman is Nirakara, Nirguna.
It is formless and attributeless.
It is Akhanda, Paripurna, Satchidananda.
It is indivisible, All-full, Existence-Knowledge-Bliss.
It is Nitya, Suddha, Buddha, Mukta.
It is Eternal, all-knowing, pure and free.
It is Akarta! Abhokta, Asanga.
It is non-doer, non-enjoyer, unattached.
It is Nirvikara, Akshara, Ananta.
It is unchanging, imperishable, infinite.

Snake-in-the-Rope Analogy

Remember the Rajju-sarpa Nyaya:
Snake-in-the-rope analogy.
Just as a snake is superimposed on a rope,
This body and mind are superimposed on the Atman.
Bring a light,
The snake vanishes.
Attain the knowledge of the Atman,
This body disappears.

There Is Only One Soul

"Ekam eva Advitiyam Brahma."
The Soul of an ant, dog,
Elephant and man is the same.
The Soul in a sinner
Is the same as the Soul in a saint.
The Soul of a peasant
Is the same as that of a king.
Realise the oneness and be free.

Practise complacency,

Mudita; Rejoice at the happiness of others,
Because all are your own Self.
See your Self in all beings.
Again and again try this.
Jealousy will vanish.
All hatred and malice will cease.
You will realise the unity of the Self.
You will enjoy peace and bliss.

Share With All

Share with others what you have:
Physical, mental, moral and spiritual.
Do not hoard wealth.
Do not covet the wealth of others.
In sharing there is joy and peace.
Sharing generates cosmic love
And destroys greed.
Sharing removes selfishness
And creates selflessness.
Sharing purifies your heart.
Sharing develops oneness.

Japa of Om During Work

When you work do mental Japa of Om.
There may be breaks;
It does not matter.
Keep the Atma-Bhava always.
Again and again generate the Bhava.
Associate Satchidananda with Om.
Feel "Om is Satchidananda."
Repeat the formula: "Om Ekah Satchidananda Atman."
Negate the illusory names and forms.
This will lead to Self-realisation.

Take the Essence

When you look at any form,
Take out the essence.
That essence is the Atman or the Soul.
Behold only the true Self.
Reject the Nama-Rupa,
Just as you reject the skin of a fruit.

Again and again try and feel this.
You will attain Self-realisation.

Remember Sankara's Words

Remember constantly Sankara's words:
"Brahma Satyam Jagan Mithya,
Jivo Brahmaiva Naaparah."
Brahman is real, the world is unreal;
The individual soul is identical with Brahman.
Meditate on this great saying.
The reality of the world will vanish.
You will be established in Brahman.

Be a Witness

Keep the Sakshi-bhava.
Be a witness of your thoughts.
Be a witness of the waking state.
Be a witness of the actions of the senses.
Separate yourself from the body,
The mind and the senses.
Again and again try.
Discipline and again discipline.
Identify yourself with the Sakshi or the Atman.
This is Vedanta in daily life.

Know Thyself

Be simple, be humble, be gentle.
Be straightforward, be honest,
Be sincere.
Be truthful, be bold, be cheerful.
Be tolerant, be generous,
Be virtuous.
Be serene, be self-controlled,
Be Self-delighted.
Love all, embrace all,
Be kind to all.
Discriminate and be dispassionate.
Reflect and meditate.
Know thy Self and be free.
This is Vedanta in daily life.

Watch the Breath

The breath sings.
The song of Soham:
"I am He; He am 1."
During inhalation there is "So."
During exhalation there is "Ham."
It reminds you of your identity with Brahman.
"Soham" is the highest Mantra.
It comes in the Isavasya Upanishad
And the Hamsa Upanishad.
Remember "Soham." Meditate on "Soham."

Study These Books

Study Atma-Bodha,
Vivekachudamani,
The ten classical Upanishads,
The Brahma-Sutras and
"Vedanta Jyoti",
"Vedanta in Daily Life,
" "First Lessons in Vedanta,"
"Practice of Vedanta,"
"Philosophy of OM",
Panchadasi, Panchikarana,
Yoga-Vasishtha,"Moksha-Gita",
"The Realisation of the Absolute",
"Lectures on Vedanta",
"Ten Upanishads."
You will be inspired and elevated,

Vedantic Formulae

"Om", "Soham", "Sivoham",
"Sivah Kevaloham",
"Hamsah Soham, Soham Hamsah",
"Satchidananda-Svarupoham",
"Aham Brahmasmi"-
Are the Important Vedantic Formulae.
Great sentences of the Upanishads.
Meditate on these Formulae.
Keep one for your daily meditation.
They are all Maha-Vakyas:
They speak of the identity
Of the individual soul and the Supreme Soul.

They will help you
In the attainment of Self-realisation.

Be Balanced

If a man abuses you,
Enquire: Reflect:
What is this abuse?
Can this abuse hurt the Soul?
The Soul of the abuser and the abused is the same.
Abuse is mere vibration in the air.
It is mere sound.
The abuser simply wastes his tongue.
He is ignorant and weak.
I simply pity him.
I am myself the abuse, the abuser and the abused.
I am above abuse and praise.
Thus attain serenity and Samata.
This is Vedanta in Daily Life.

Possess These Means

Discriminate.
Be dispassionate.
Be serene.
Be self-controlled.
Endure.
Renounce.
Have Faith.
Concentrate.
Have yearning.
These are the means to Liberation.

Antaranga Sadhana

Hear the Srutis.
Reflect.
Meditate.
Realise.

Enquire 'Who Am I?'

What is this I'?
This physical sheath is not the T',
For it is inert and perishable.

The Prana is not the T',
It is also inert; It has a beginning and an end.
The mind also is not the T'
For it is inert.
It has a beginning and an end.
The intellect also is not the 'T'.
The causal body is not the 'T'.
The real I' is the Absolute,
Atman or Brahman.
It is imperishable.
It is a mass of Consciousness-Bliss.
"Tat Tvam Asi".

Separate and Identify

Separate yourself From the senses and the mind.
Be a witness.
The eyes do not see.
They are only instruments.
The ears do not hear.
They are also instruments.
They are products of Prakriti.
The Atman is pure Consciousness.
That pure Consciousness thou art.
Identify yourself with the Atman.
I am not this body.

Negate the Body and the Mind

This body is not mine.
I am not this mind.
This mind is not mine.
I am not this intellect.
This intellect is not mine.
I am (Satchidananda) Atman.
I am Satchidananda Svarupa.

Assert and Realise

I am immortal Atman
Om Om Om
I am Absolute Consciousness
Om Om Om
I am Eternity
Om Om Om

I am Infinity
Om Om Om
I am all-pervading Atman
Om Om Om
I am Self-effulgent Atman
Om Om Om
I am All-blissful Atman
Om Om Om
I am Existence-Absolute
Om Om Om

Chant and Sing Om

Sometimes chant Om.
Sometimes roar Om.
Sometimes sing Om.
Sometimes do Japa of Om loudly.
Sometimes do mental Japa of Om.
Sometimes concentrate on Om picture.
Sometimes write Om in a notebook.
Sometimes meditate on Om.

Song of Om

Om Om Om Om Om Om Om
Om Om Om Om Om Om Om

Om Om Om Om Om Vichar.
Om Om Om Om Bhajo Omkar.
Om Om Om Om Pukarenge.
Om Om Om Om Uchcharenge.

Antarai

Within is Om, without is Om,
To the right is Om.
Above is Om, below is Om,
To the left is Om.
In front is Om, behind is Om,
Everywhere is Om.

Vedantic Sadhana

Get up at 4 a.m.
Do Japa of Om.
Meditate on Om.
Feel "Aham Brahma Asmi".
Again and again generate

The Brahmakara-Vritti.
During work also have the Bhava.
This is very important.
Be truthful in your dealings.
Have another sitting at night.

The State of a Jivanmukta

A Jivanmukta is ever peaceful and blissful.
He has equal vision and balanced mind.
He is equal in honour and dishonour,
Censure and praise, pleasure and pain.
He is free from egoism, pride, anger, lust, etc.
He has no attachment.
He has no likes and dislikes.
He is full of wisdom.
He clears any doubt.

Song of a Vedantin

Sivoham Sivoham Sivoham Soham,
Satchidananda-Svarupoham.

Antarai

Achyutoham, Anantoham, Advaitoham.
Chidghanoham, Chinmayoham, Chinmatroham.
Nityoham, Nirmaloham, Niranjanoham.
Aham Atma, Aham Brahma, Aham Chaitanyam
Sarvantaratma, Antaryami, Sarva-Sakshi,
Paramatmoham, Paripurnoham, Paramanandoham.
Tejomayoham, Jyotirmayoham, Prakasamayoham.
Sasvatoham, Satyoham, Satchidanandoham.

Song of Chidananda

Chidananda Chidananda Chidananda Hum,
Har Halme Almast Satchidananda Hum.
Ajarananda Amarananda Achalananda Hum,
Har Halme Almast Satchidananda Hum.

Antarai

Nirbhaya Aur Nischinta Chidghanananda Hum.
Kaivalya-Kevala-Kutastha-Ananda Hum.
Nitya Suddha Siddha Satchidananda Hum.
Knowledge-Bliss, Knowledge-Bliss, Bliss-Absolute,
In all conditions I am Knowledge-Bliss-Absolute.
I am without old age, without death, without motion,

In all conditions I am Knowledge-Bliss-Absolute.
I am without fear, without worry, Bliss-Absolute, Existence-Absolute,
Knowledge-Absolute.
Independent, unchanging, non-dual Atman, broImmortal Atman,
Advaita Atman,
Eternal, pure, perfect Knowledge-Bliss-Absolute.
(Chidananda....)

Four Mahavakyas

1. Prajnanam Brahma-Consciousness is Brahman.
2. Aham Brahma Asmi-I am Brahman.
3. Tat Tvam Asi-That thou art.
4. Ayam Atma Brahma-This Atman is Brahman.

Mantras for Ahamgraha Upasana

(VEDANTIC MEDITATION)

1. Om.
2. Aham Brahma Asmi-I am Brahman.
3. Soham I am He.
4. Sivoham I am Siva.
5. Satchidananda Svarupoham-I am Existence- Consciousness-Bliss-Absolute.

Chapter XI

WORLDLY MAN, WAKE UP!

Human Birth Is for God-realisation

The Goal of life is the attainment of Self-realisation, or God-consciousness. There is One Supreme Undying Principle or Essence, the Brahman or the Absolute Self, which dwells in the chambers of your heart and everywhere. Brahman has existed in the past, exists in the present and will exist in the future. Brahman is Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute. An ignorant man vainly searches for happiness in perishable objects of the external world which is only a dream-appearance in reality, conditioned in time, space and causation. The worldly man has no peace of mind. He amasses wealth, begets children, gets titles, honours, fame, name and yet his mind is restless. He has no abiding joy and lasting happiness. He is still in want of something. Rich people possess immense wealth, have decent bungalows, servants, take dainties and palatable dishes and enjoy all sorts of comforts, but have no peace of mind. They are restless. They are searching for something; what, they do not know. They feel they are in want of something, the nature of which they do not exactly comprehend.

In the whirlpool of fleeting sensual pleasures you have forgotten the purpose of life and its goal. In your pursuit after the phantom-shows of worldly vanities, you have annihilated the spiritual instincts and longings of the soul. What a sad state! Mysterious is Maya! Mysterious is Moha.

You have entirely become a creature of servile imitation. You cannot remain even for a day without self-shaving. The razor, the mirror and the shaving stick are your objects of worship, as soon as you get up from bed. You cannot walk bare-footed even for a few yards. You want a servant to put on the socks and the shoes and tie the laces. You cannot walk even half a mile. You want a Ricksha or a Tonga. How effeminate you have become! How much degenerated you are!

O dear Ram! Remember that you are a lonely pilgrim here. This world is a public inn only. Your permanent abode is in the Atma or the Self which is this All. Finish your pilgrimage quickly by doing rigorous Tapas and meditation and reach your original abode of Immortality, everlasting Bliss and Peace, in this very birth!

To have a human birth is difficult. To follow the Vedic path is rare. To be well-versed in scriptural lore is still rarer. But the rarest of all is discrimination between the Self and the not-Self, Self-realisation and getting established in Brahman. Liberation is attained through the well-earned merits of a hundred crores of births.

Human birth, longing for liberation and contact of a great saint or a sage are all obtained by the grace of the Lord. He verily commits suicide who, having obtained all these means, still does not exert for Liberation.

Nobody knows what the next birth will be. How can one make enquiry into Vedanta, if one takes an animal birth? Bullocks, horses, elephants and buffaloes get emaciated through starvation and carrying heavy loads without any rest. They are not able to express their sufferings and pains. Should you not do righteous actions to prevent yourself from taking such miserable births?

We cannot extend our lifetime even by a second though we spend crores of pounds for this purpose. What greater harm can we do ourselves than wasting such a precious life?

Neither charity, nor sacrifice, nor fame, nor fasting, nor begetting a good son, nor control of breath, nor victory over the enemy, nor the society of friends, nor Siddhis and Riddhis can stand in comparison to the Great Glory of the Realisation of the Self.

Waste not Precious Life

You do not know even a single Sloka of the Gita or the Upanishads. You do not know how to sit on Padmasana. You do not know the efficacy of Mantra-Kirtana. You do not know anything about self-analysis, mind-control, self-restraint, concentration and introspection. You have lived in vain! You have wasted this precious life. Hotels, restaurants, cinema houses, are your abodes of Immortality or Vaikuntha Dhama. Really you are leading a miserable life. If you can talk something on dry politics, you think you are a great hero!

Time is fleeting. The night is wasted in sleep and pleasure. The day is wasted in idle talk, amassing money and maintenance of the family. Days, months and years are rolling away. Hairs have become grey. Teeth have fallen. You are attached to perishable objects through Moha. Tell me, friends, how long you will be a slave to the fleeting things of the world? How long are you going to repeat the same sensual enjoyments? How long do you wish to worship mammon and woman? When will you find time to meditate on the Lord and to do Virtuous deeds? Think and reflect.

This world of names and forms is constantly changing. Seas dry up and vast sandy deserts come into being in their places. Elevations become depressions and depressions become elevations. Sand becomes stone and stone becomes sand. Blocks of stones become lime and lime becomes dust. Forests become model towns and cities become deserted places. Grass becomes blood, blood becomes milk, milk again becomes blood. Blood becomes flesh. A young man becomes an old man and a beautiful girl becomes an ugly woman. The fatty man becomes thin and a lean girl a fatty woman. A Zamindar becomes a beggar and a beggar becomes a Zamindar. At the back of these everchanging objects there is the changeless, eternal, Immortal Brahman or the Supreme Self. The Ultimate Principle or Atman, fearless, timeless, endless and beginningless, shines eternally behind the names and forms. He who realises this Brahman attains Immortality, Freedom and Eternal Peace!

Kings and lords will pass away. This world will pass away with all its occupants. The sun, moon and stars will pass away. All joys and sorrows will pass away. Wife, children, wealth, property will pass away. The five elements, the earth and heaven will pass away. Only Brahman, the Pure Satchidananda, will shine eternally.

The leaves of life are falling off. Youth is fading. The days are rolling on. Time, the destroyer, lays his icy hands on the whole world. Existence in this world is as momentary as a bubble or lightning!

O Man! Wealth, vehicles, sons, women, dominions, property, are worthless! They are all perishable. Seek the Lotus-feet of the Lord and attain Immortality, Eternal Bliss and Supreme Peace!

If you do not meditate on the Lord, you will be thrown in lower births. If you do not know Him, the cycle of births and deaths will not come to an end. If you do not think of Him, you will take countless births as germs and insects. Exert and realise Him. Then all troubles will terminate.

Renunciation Is a Glorious Thing

Who is a real hero? He who has controlled his mind and senses, who has annihilated the Vasanas, Samskaras, cravings, who has attained Self-realisation, is a real hero of heroes. A liberated sage, a dynamic Yogi, a realised Bhagavata, is the real hero of heroes, indeed! Ordinarily, ignorant people of the world say that he who has renounced the world is a timid man who cannot earn his livelihood. This is a sad and terrible mistake. It is very difficult to renounce family, children, relations, possessions, property, wealth, One in a million only can take to

Renunciation. Now, take out all the leaders of the world and put them in solitude for a year in a forest. They will feel like fish out of water. They cannot remain. They will run back to the world within a week without informing their Guru. Such is their spiritual strength!

The life of a Sannyasi is the best kind of life in this world. A true Sannyasi is the true monarch of the three worlds. Even an aspirant is the Emperor of the three worlds. Lord Krishna says: “Only wishing to know Yoga even, the seeker after Yoga goeth beyond the world of Brahma” (VI. 44).

This world is full of difficulties and troubles. No one save a Yogi or a Jnani is free from these worldly miseries and anxieties. Go wherever you like. It is all the same.

For a passionate man, there is much pleasure in this world. He runs after money and woman. His mind is intoxicated, perverted and clouded. For a Viveki or a man of discrimination, this world is a ball of burning fire. Lead a life of Vairagya and renunciation. Then and then alone can you be happy.

You must show extreme contempt towards worldly objects. Treat all earthly possessions and sensuous enjoyments as dung, poison, dust and straw. Turn the mind away from them. Then only will you get Jnana.

This world is a mere Mela of two days, and this body is a mere appearance for two seconds. Even if you become the sole monarch of the whole world, you cannot enjoy real bliss and peace. “By the worldly affections, by the avarice of wealth, the acquirement of women and jewels and by the attachment to external fleeting forms and beauties, the mind gets fattened, while indifference to them thins it out!” (Yoga-vasishtha).

The Mahabharata says: “Desire is not gratified by indulgence. On the other hand it increases like fire after a pouring of ghee over it. All the wheat and maize grown in the world, all wealth, all cattle, all women even, will not be sufficient to gratify the desire of one person. Knowing this, a wise man should control his mind.”

To attain to an exalted state of spirituality, you should in the first instance fully realise the glory of life in the Spirit or the Soul. Then only will you have the requisite strength to kick and spurn this world mercilessly and take to a life of meditation on the Atman and of renunciation. Constant remembrance of and meditation on the following Slokas of the Bhagavadgita will help you to a great extent in the attainment of your goal:

“He whose self is unattached to external contacts, and findeth joy in the Self, having the self harmonised with the Eternal by Yoga, enjoys happiness exempt from decay” (Ch. V-21).

"That in which he findeth the Supreme Delight, which the purified Reason alone can grasp, beyond the senses, wherein established, he moveth not from the Reality; which, having obtained, he thinketh there is no greater gain beyond it; wherein established he is not shaken even by heavy sorrow" (Ch. VI-21, 22).

"The Yogi who thus, ever harmonising the Self, hath put away sin, he easily enjoyeth the infinite bliss of contact with the Eternal" (Ch. VI-28).

"When the dweller in the body hath crossed over these three qualities, whence all bodies have been produced, liberated from birth, death, old age and sorrow, he drinketh the nectar of Immortality" (Ch. XIV-20).

Every moment you should be ready for Sannyasa. The very longing for Sannyasa shows that there is growth of spirituality. Deluded people bring various vain arguments: "Mohammed was a householder. Nanak was a householder. Rama married. Krishna married. Ramakrishna Paramahamsa married." Delusion! Even if you are a Jnani, you will have terrible downfall when you come in contact with worldly persons and worldly things! Many Sannyasins have fallen. Many Yogis have fallen! The Bhagavata says that actual fire is not so dangerous, heated iron is not so dangerous, burning charcoal is not so dangerous, as the company of worldly persons! Worldly people always speak against Sannyasa, against renunciation and Tapas! Even a cobra is not so very dangerous as these deluded people!

Even in an advanced stage of life, people remain in their house with family, wives and children, but take fancy to say: "I have got mental detachment; I am a mental Sannyasin." Ah! There is a terrible attachment in them! Sannyasa has its own glory and splendour. Sannyasa is extremely necessary. One may say: "I do not need orange-coloured robes." Still Sannyasa is necessary. Sannyasa has got its own psychology. All arguments against it are false! The Mundaka Upanishad will tell you how necessary Sannyasa is. The world has not produced a greater genius than Sankara, the greatest Sannyasin! Why did Ramakrishna Paramahamsa take Sannyasa? No use of argumentation and logic; mere vanity of the intellect! Sannyasa is necessary though you may have Advaitic Realisation. Totapuri, Ramakrishna's Guru, though he had Brahmic Realisation, took Sannyasa. Why did Mandana Misra take Sannyasa? Yajnavalkya had the highest Realisation, but yet he took Sannyasa. Why? The world has not produced a greater sage than Yajnavalkya. Study his instructions to his wife, Maitreyi! Sannyasa destroys all worldliness, all evil Samskaras, and establishes you in Divine Meditation. You must come out of the house and wander about begging for alms and fix the mind eternally on the Infinite Absolute. Then only can you have the choice either to take or not to take the orange robe. Do not content yourself with saying, "I have no attachment, I am a mental Sannyasin." You will weep afterwards. Study the Mundaka Upanishad. If Sannyasa is not necessary, why should there be four Ashrams? Were the makers of such rules mere fools? How can you understand the glory of Sannyasa, while remaining in the house and the office, clubs and hotels? How can you know the glory of the destruction of Maya, Realisation of God? You want to eat, drink and enjoy all day and night! You are immersed in sensual pleasures. There is no dispassion. That is why you are afraid to renounce the world. You try to justify your worldliness through foolish arguments!

You are afraid to bear suffering; you always wish to be carried away by sense-cravings! How can you know the glory of Sannyasa? The deluded attachment to men and women, friends and relatives, money and gold, has to be ruthlessly burnt to ashes! All the so-called duties of the world have to be kicked away for the sake of that glorious state of Self-realisation. The Mahabharata proclaims that for the sake of Self-realisation the whole world should be renounced without any hesitation. Why do you roll in this

miserable Samsara? Are you not ashamed? If you have real manliness, you must break the chains of earthly bondage, the bondage of birth and death, old age and disease, hunger and thirst! That is courage, that is heroism! That is real manliness. Do not be cowards; start now; fight against worldly delusion against the mind and the senses!

The parents nowadays are irresponsible. They are deluded and think they are educating their children, allow them to rot in delusion, worldliness and passion! If there are five sons, the parents want all their sons to become barristers and judges! There is vanity at the root of all this. O man! If at least one of your sons has the glorious fortune to open his inward eye, realise the futility of life in the world, renounce all his desires and attachments and take to the wise path of Self-realisation, he has done the greatest duty to his parents; he has opened the doors of Salvation to seven generations before and seven generations after in his family; he has become a centre of worship and adoration country-people! What is the use of physical service, to all his fighting for social and political freedom, when everybody is locked up in the jail of egoistic delusion? What is the use of beating the air, thinking it is drum? Even so is all this activity and business of life in this world which is only an airy nothing in reality, but is taken to be a solid true existence by the gross-minded ones. Therefore, exert and try to realise your Self!

Sense-life Is a Terrible Bondage

If you want God and God alone, kick off the world ruthlessly. Enough of tea and coffee, enough of soda, lemonade and crushes; enough of novels and cinemas, enough of races and aeroplanes, enough of father, mother, brothers, children, friends and relatives! You came alone and you will go alone. None will follow you save your own actions. Realise God. All miseries will come to an end.

A worldly-minded fashionable wife (or husband) is a sharp knife to cut off the life of the husband (or wife). Be wedded to Shanti and have Vairagya as the son, and Viveka, the magnanimous daughter and eat the delicious divine fruit of Atma Jnana which can make you Immortal!

Sensual pleasure is tantalising. There is enchantment so long as the person does not possess the object of desire. After obtaining possession of the object, he finds that he is entangled in it. The bachelor thinks of his marriage day in and day out, but enjoyment does not and cannot bring satisfaction to him. Far from it, it only aggravates and intensifies the desire and makes the mind more restless through passion and Trishna. He realises that he is in imprisonment. This is Mayaic jugglery. This world is full of temptations.

You cannot get bliss in the objects of the world. It is only materialistic poison. Further, marriage is a lifelong imprisonment; it is the greatest bondage on the face of the earth. A bachelor who was once free is now tied to the yoke, and his hands and feet are chained. This is the experience of married people. They weep after marriage. Therefore, do not marry, if you can help it. Escape will be difficult after marriage. Realise the glory of life in the spiritual path and the great difficulties, anxieties, worries and troubles of married life. Develop intense Vairagya. Assert your birthright of God-consciousness. Art thou not Brahman Itself in Truth?

A great man is not one who possesses enormous wealth. A man of renunciation alone is the greatest man in the world. He may be clad in rags. He may appear ugly to people of clouded intellect. Yet he is the happiest, the greatest and the richest man in the whole world! He has no cares and worries. He inherits the kingdom of Peace.

O poor worldling! Much hemmed in on all sides and whirling in different conditions in this fluctuating world, you are ever being driven by delusion and afflicted with pains, like dusts of sand floating in the midst of a large stone. Now, reflecting upon Time which is eternal in its true nature, you cannot but term your hundred years of life as a tiny moment. While this is so in fact, how is it that you estimate your life greatly and fall into all sorts of despondencies through the powerful deluding desires? Who is there so miserable in life as those who are spoiled through their gross mind? Fie on your uneven life! Comparing this earth to the countless universes that exist but of which you are unconscious, you cannot but consider it as an atom. It is really surprising that you should rate so high this universe so full of pains. Even the greatest of persons will in course of time become the lowest of the low. All enjoyments, great men, and their kindred have appeared in former times. Where, then, is certitude of existence of all objects now? The innumerable earths with their rulers and their wealth have all perished like fine sand! The Devalokas with their Indras and celestial wealth have all disappeared like a flash in the sky above. No limit can be imposed upon the number and size of the universes, the Brahmas, Brahmandas, and Jivas that have come and gone. Where, then, are all the objects that have vanished out of sight? Where, then, is the permanency of this earthly life? It is only by bestowing your desires on the illusion of a long dream of physical delusion in the sable night of the unreal Maya that you have debased yourself to this ignorant state. Enough, enough with all the births and deaths you have undergone hithertofore. Not a single beneficent object exists in this world, either in the beginning, middle or end. Are not all created objects coated over with the varnish of destruction? You enact in your daily life sinful acts, painful deeds and illimitable vices which cannot be pardoned. In youth you are enveloped with Ajnana or illusion; in adult age you are entangled in the meshes of sense-pleasures; in old age you groan under the burden of Samsara and deluded attachment for family and children even when in debility. You eventually die a miserable death. Being thus always half-sinking in the quagmire of delusion, when will you find time to devote yourself to virtuous actions? How came this Maya to play and dance in this world? This dreadful ghost of your mind dances in the theatre of this universe to the music of the organs. If in the opening and the closing of the eyelids, many Brahmas are created and destroyed, what are you, a mere puny creature revelling in the filth of earthliness?

Sensual Life Is Shameful Life

You are but repeating the same actions as yesterday, yielding but momentary happiness or delusion, and enjoyed things do recur again. Things seen yesterday do again present themselves today. Ornaments worn with exaltation yesterday, are again donned by you today. And yet, even intelligent persons do not become disgusted with them and are not ashamed to enjoy them again and again in their gross delirium of worldliness. Fie on their intellect! Like ignorant children that taste again and again sweetmeats which impart sweetness for the time being, you are also afflicted, ignorant of the true path. Days, fortnights, months, years, and Yugas do cycle again and again as formerly, and nothing new crops up. Wealth which only makes hosts of thoughts whirl in the brain will not confer bliss on you. This wealth which the mind covets and is very ephemeral in its true nature is utterly useless like a flower-bud in a creeper growing on a high wall and encircled by a serpent. The Prana, which is like a drop of rain-water dripping from the end of a leaf turned overhead, flits out of the body at any time. This life is ephemeral like autumnal clouds or a gheeless lamp or the waves of the ocean. Life and death are two acts in the scene of the Juggler, Maya. The lives of those who have freed themselves from rebirth are the true ones and the noblest; but others' lives are like those of old asses. There is nothing so baneful as this life which is utterly perishable in its nature and fleeting in the bestowal of sensual pleasures. The

fire of desires has completely burnt you up. In the present state even a bath in Ambrosia will not cool you. You have spoiled yourself to such a pitiable extent. It is these over-vexing desires that bring on the pain or rebirth, the heaviest and the most unbearable of all pains. This body which is composed of muscles, intestines, urine and faecal matter and is subject to changes, being at one time fat and at another time lean, shines in this mundane existence simply to undergo pains. What beauty, then, is there to be enjoyed in this body? The body of both rich and poor, tall and short, is made up of the same physical stuff. It is false air-bag, filled with rotten vegetable urine and faeces and various kinds of other impurities. These are worshipped by the worldly man. What a pity!

If lust which is the source of all enjoyments in this world ceases, then all worldly bondage, which has its substratum in the mind, will cease. Even the most virulent of poisons is no poison; but sensual objects are truly a deadly poison. The former defiles one body only, whereas the latter adulterates many bodies in successive rebirths. You are a slave of passions and desires, emotions and attractions. When are you going to rise up from this miserable state? Those persons, who, in spite of the knowledge of the non-existence of happiness. Both in the past and in the present, in the baneful objects of the world, do yet entangle themselves in them with their thoughts clinging to them, deserve the appellation of an ass, if not a worse one. If you do not possess Viveka, if you do not try your best for salvation, if you spend your lifetime in eating, drinking and sleeping, you are a horizontal being only having to learn some lessons from these animals which possess far more self-restraint.

Your Wretched State

Desire, anger, jealousy, worry, anxieties, cares and excitements torment you every second. Deaths of persons whom you loved most give you severe shock. Yet you will never renounce this momentary pleasures of the senses of this unreal, mundane existence. Such is the depth of sensual enjoyment! You will say with pride: “Oh, I am a powerful man. I am very clever and intelligent. I can do anything. There is no Isvara.” But when a mere scorpion stings you sharp, you will call out bitterly: “O Narayana, help me!” If the hair becomes grey you will invent various dyes to blacken it. You will invent ‘monkey-gland grafting’ for rejuvenation. If the teeth fall, you will put on a new false dental set. You will never leave the will to live and enjoy.’ Hopeless specimens!

There are scorpion-stings on one side; flies, bugs, mosquitoes, thorns trouble you from another corner. The sun scorches you in summer and the biting winter sucks your blood. Influenza, plague, leprosy, fashionable appendicitis, pyorrhoea, small-pox are ready to devour you. Fear, delusion, grief, sorrow and misery kill you every moment.

Renunciation comes only to those who were once kings in their previous births, who developed discrimination between the real and the unreal in their previous births, who have done meritorious actions in their previous births, who led the life of a Sannyasin in several births. Only those who have tremendous will-power, spiritual strength, dispassion, discrimination, and who thirst for salvation can renounce the world. Renunciation demands superhuman strength. Renunciation or Sannyasa is stern stuff.

After all, what is this world? It is like the footprint of a calf when compared to the Infinite Brahman or the Absolute. It is a small bubble in the ocean of Existence. It is less than an atom. The worthless nature of the joys of this world is already known to a Viveki or a man of discrimination or an aspirant or an

ordinary worldly man even in whom there is not even an iota of spiritual awakening or a little opening of the eye of wisdom.

But this world is a very great thing or solid reality for a passionate, worldly-minded man. As his mind is soaked in worldly thoughts, worldly Vasanas, and worldly Samskaras, as he is surrounded by Asuric environment, as he is breathing the atmosphere emanating from sensual filth, he is not able to comprehend subtle things which are transcendental. He has forgotten all about the glory of divinity and superliving.

Just reflect for a while on your state. As a baby in the womb you are covered with urine and pus and scorched by the fire of hunger. At the age of adolescence you are puffed up with the enjoyment of the sense-objects, etc. As a senile old man you become extremely weak in body and mind. A life of delusion amidst money and sensual objects is your pitiable lot.

The Jiva undergoes unbearable suffering in the womb of the mother for ten months, being placed in the midst of faecal matter, urine, blood, flesh, phlegm and marrow and being burnt by the Jatharagni.

At the time of birth, the child's head should come first. If the child gets obstructed by change of position, either the child or the mother must die. To save the mother, the child has to be cut to pieces. Even if the delivery becomes normal, the pain caused to the mother and the baby is immense.

A big officer, a big landlord is only a big fool if he nourishes this body only and forgets all about his Soul, if he indulges in sensual objects only and does not attempt for Self-realisation.

Knowledge of the Self or Brahma Jnana is more precious and important than the kingdom of all the worlds. King Janaka said to Yajnavalkva, "I will give thee, O venerable Guru, my kingdom and also my own self to become thy slave." Such is the glory of a Sage or a Brahma Jnani.

If you do not possess Viveka, if you do not try your extreme level best for the attainment of Salvation, if you spend your whole lifetime in eating, drinking, sleeping, marrying, divorcing and propagating the race, how are you better than an animal? As a matter of fact, they are better than you! You will have to sit at the feet of the animals and learn several lessons from them. Even animals possess self-restraint to an astounding degree. O man! Where has your self-restraint gone?

O man! Never say: "My body, my son, my wife, my house, my property, my garden, etc." Attachment is the root cause of the innumerable miseries and troubles of this world. Discipline your mind well, realise the illusory nature of all that appears here in this world.

The Bhagavadgita says: "The delights that are contact-born are verily the wombs of pain, for they have a beginning and an end, O Kaunteya! The wise do not rejoice in them" (Ch. V-22). "Indifference to the objects of the senses, and also absence of egoism, insight into the pain and evil of birth, old age and sickness" (Ch. XIII-8). "That which arises from the union of the senses with their objects is at first as nectar, but in the end is like venom" (Ch. VIII-38). "Having obtained this transient, joyless world, worship Me" (Ch. IX-33).

O man! Are you not ashamed to call this filthy body as "I" and to say "this is mine", "he is my son", when everything is perishable? This identification with the body is the seat of the great Raurava hell. What is the difference between the worms and men that rejoice in this ill-smelling body?

Maya, the great juggler, prepares a skeleton, covers it with flesh, and hides the various impurities with a shining skin. O deluded man! How long are you going to call this body as yours? How long are you going to cling to this perishable body? Give up this deluded imagination, and identify yourself with your real Nature-the Satchidananda Svarupa. Are you not tired of saying: "My son is ailing from typhoid. My second daughter is to be married. I have so many debts to pay. My wife is worrying me to purchase for her a good necklace. My eldest son-in-law died recently." Indeed, such miseries should open your eyes now at least.

The Yoga-vasishtha rightly says: "Those persons who, in spite of the knowledge of the non-existence of happiness both in the past and the present in the baneful objects of the world, do yet entangle themselves in them with their thoughts clinging to them, deserve the appellation of an ass, if not a worse one."

Human love is hollow. It is mere animal attraction. It is passion only. It is carnal love. It is selfish love. It is ever-changing. It is all hypocrisy and sheer show. Dear man! You can find real, lasting love in God and God alone. His love knows no change.

Raja Bhartrihari says in his Vairagyasataka:

"Even though you may roam about heaven and earth with a view to obtain riches at the sacrifice of dignity of birth, rank in life and self-respect, your efforts will not be attended with success; and even if perchance you succeed, your desires will never he satiated. O ignoble man! What horrible sins and crimes have you not committed just to fill the cavity of your stomach and cover this body with a piece of cloth?

"Hope is a flowing river. Desires are its waters. Longings are its waves. Attachments for objects are the animals of prey living therein. One cannot cross this river because of the countless whirlpools of ignorance in the waters and the precipitous nature of the river banks. Only Yogis of pure mind can cross this river and enjoy highest bliss.

"Insects jump into the blazing fire and the fish seizes the bait attached to the hook. But this is because of their sheer ignorance. But man who is supposed to have discrimination, and a knowledge of right and wrong should do better. But does he? So, he does not abandon sensual pleasures that are attended with various defects! How inscrutable is the power of delusion!

"How dare you say there is happiness in this world, when you have come forth from within an impure womb, when in youth you are polluted by sensual pleasures and mental distraction, and in old age you become the laughing stock of youngsters ?

"The span of man's life is very short-said, at the maximum, to be a hundred years, Half of it is spent in sleep; and out of the rest, half is passed away in childhood and old age. Then there are periods of illness, bereavements and troubles, and serving others. What happiness can there be for a man in this world?

"O, let us eat begged food, let the sky be our clothing. Let the earth be our bed. We have absolutely nothing to do with riches."

The Upanishads emphatically declare: "Yo Vai Bhuma Tat Sukham-Naalpe Sukhamast!" You cannot have real happiness in this world. The real 'Shanti', the Peace which the mind is hankering after is only to be found in the 'Bhuma'. Bhuma is unconditioned, beyond time, beyond space and causation. Bhuma, the

Great, is Freedom,-freedom from the trammels of flesh, freedom from the tricks of the mind, freedom from the plays of delusion. Bhuma is Perfection, beyond all limitations. Bhuma is Brahman, the eternal Absolute! You will have to remember all this constantly. You will have to write this and read this, talk of this and preach this, meditate on this and live in this, 'Yo Vai Bhuma Tat Sukham.'

Real Svarajya Is Atma Svarajya

From the Transcendental viewpoint, what is this Svarajya in this earth-plane after all? What is this political gamble? It is all a play of children. In one sense from the highest viewpoint, all the leaders of the world are wasting their time, life and energy. Had they directed their energy and mind towards Yoga and transcendental Atma Svarajya, they would have become great divinities on this earth and done more spiritual good to the world. These great men would have taken to Nivritti already, had they really understood the glory and necessity of

Nivritti Marga, had they come in contact with great sages, had they a real grasp of the purpose of life, goal and the nature of the Svarupa of the Atman, mind and the world. A little comfortable living, a little bread with butter and jam cannot relieve the sufferings of the people, cannot give salvation or Absolute Independence and Freedom to them, cannot remove ignorance, the root cause of all human miseries and of births and deaths. Wise men, with great talents, should attempt to give spiritual food to the people and make their lives lofty, worthy, sublime and grand and make them Immortal.

Nachiketas was tempted by Lord Yama in a variety of ways. Yama offered him limitless dominion, countless celestial damsels, numberless chariots, long life and abundant gold. What did the boy Nachiketas say? "My Lord! These things last till tomorrow. They wear out the vigour of all the senses. Even the longest life is verily short. Keep thou thy chariots, the dance and the music. No man can be made happy by wealth. Only that boon which I have chosen is fit to be longed for by me; grant me that boon, the Knowledge of the Self which can make me Immortal."

Tyaga Is True Heroism

Here, you see Nachiketas the hero of heroes, a boy of 10 or 12 years, who had inexhaustible spiritual strength born of wisdom of the Self. The world is in dire need of such heroes and leaders who can help and lead people in the right path and show them the way to eternal bliss and Immortality!

Then, again, when the sage Yajnavalkya offered all his temporal property and estate to his wife Maitreyi, what did she say? "My venerable Lord! Even if I have the wealth of the whole world, can I attain Immortality ? Give me that inexhaustible spiritual wealth which can ever make me rich and full at heart, that wealth of wisdom and immortality of the Soul. I am longing for that wealth and that wealth alone."

Here is the heroin of heroins which India produced, who still lives in our hearts. The world is in great need of such heroins.

Those leaders who are afraid of renunciation, who have not understood the glory of Sannyasa, renunciation and Nivritti Marga, who cannot lead the life of Nivritti Marga, who spend their lives in the world till the end of their life, who are afraid of wearing the orange-coloured robe, who say, "We are mental Sannyasins; we have given colouring to our hearts," are all timid men only, however much

worldly work of deluding glory they might have done in this world. They can never reach the level of persons like Sri Sankara, Yajnavalkya or Dattatreya, the great spiritual lions.

One need never despair. People will ask: “How can the world go on, if all the people of the world retire to forests and lead the life of renunciation?” Even if all leaders are taken out of the world now, the world will run on smoothly, probably more smoothly. Even if all the people retire into the forest, the world will go on. The omnipotent Lord will create leaders to lead the world and continue its normal existence. Poor worldlings! One would think that they have taken a contract with Brahma that they will procreate children in this world and take care of it!

Man wants happiness. He shuns pain. He makes various sorts of efforts (Pravritti) to get happiness from objects and get himself entangled in the meshes or snares of Maya. As these objects are perishable, finite and conditioned in time, space and causation, he fails to get the desired happiness from the objects. This world is Apurna (imperfect) and there is uncertainty of life. A barrister talks at the telephone, ascends the staircase upstairs to take his meals and dies on the staircase.

There is not an iota of happiness in objects as they are Jada (insentient). Even the sensual pleasure is a reflection of Atmic Bliss only. Just as a dog, which sucks a dry bone in the streets, imagines foolishly that the blood comes from the dry bone, whereas in reality it oozes from its own lacerated palate, so also worldly-minded persons foolishly imagine that the happiness they enjoy comes from the objects.

In There is a mental uneasiness, dissatisfaction, discontentment and restlessness even multimillionaires and kings. Some kind of sorrow, misery, or pain is always present even when you are in the height of enjoyment of worldly pleasures. When the marriage of your second son is celebrated, the remembrance of your first son who passed away torments your mind. The mind is so constituted that the rhythm of pleasure and pain is kept up like the rhythm of the systole and diastole (contraction and dilation) of the heart. You entertain the ideas that the happiness will pass away soon. This apprehension adds a dust of pain even when you are in the maximum enjoyment of sensual pleasures.

Money Is a Source of Misery

Da Money is a source of pain and misery. You want wealth and are guilty of all sorts of vices in order to amass wealth. You lose all peace of mind and have no sleep due to the thought of how to earn money. You get some menial service and get hundred kicks from the employer day and night. You take bribes and keep the money safe. You do not get sleep even now and spend the time in watching over your property with constant anxiety. One day you find a robber has snatched away your wealth and what little peace you had is shattered. You pine away with grief and lose health, wealth and everything, Still you do not become wiser!

You pray for a child. You get a female child and you pray again for a male one. You get a male child after so much of fasts and observances, Vratas and Niyamas, and do not know how to marry the girl and educate the boy. You do not know what the boy will become, whether a rowdy, a thief, a warrior or short-lived. You grieve for your son and for your miserable plight! Poor man! You do not know that things are ephemeral and try to deceive you constantly.

This world is unreal. All are born to die only. All are illusory in this world. One should carefully note the deceptive nature of the mind. It is the mind alone that pictures the existence of the world as a reality, whereas the Atman alone is real.

Wealth cannot give happiness. It is Jada Maya. It makes one forget God completely. It drags one to the regions of hell.

Life is transitory. Death is incessantly staring you like a venomous serpent ever ready to strike. Various dire diseases cause much havoc to this body. Youth abandons the body quickly and old age grips it. He alone is saved who makes haste to utilise this precious life in striving to attain the Summum Bonum of life.

Egoism deludes people. Though the world is nothing, it deceives the worldly man into thinking that it is everything. It is associated with 'mineness'. This egoism is born of Avidya (ignorance). It springs from conceit. Vanity fosters it. It is the greatest enemy ever known. The secret of renunciation is the renunciation of egoism. Ahamkara or ego is the direst of diseases. He who is free from egoism is ever happy and peaceful. Desires multiply and expand on account of egoism. This inveterate enemy has spread about man the enchantments of wives, friends, children, relatives, whose spells are hard to break.

The mischievous mind wanders from one object to another like a strolling street-dog. It is not calm at any time. It is possible to drink the contents of the ocean, uproot the Sumeru mountain or swallow burning fire; but it is impossible to control this terrible mind. This world is a manifestation of this mind only. All pains are generated through the mind only. If this mind is annihilated through discrimination and Atmic enquiry, all pains, along with this world will vanish.

Desire is like an owl that flies about in the region of the mind under the darkness of affection and in the night of avarice. It destroys all divine qualities. Just as a bird is caught in a net, you are caught up in the trap of desires. Desire is the cause of rebirths and all sorts of pains, miseries and sorrows of this earth. It is like a sharp-pointed sword. It penetrates the hearts of persons and gives them sufferings for nothing.

How Rotten Physical Beauty Is

The body has a tendency to rot. Egoism lives in this body as the master with avarice as the mistress. The body is in reality a pot of filth. It will breath at any moment. The shining skin is subject to wrinkles in old age. Fie and shame on them who have mistaken this body for the Immortal Pure Soul and rely on it for their happiness and peace! He who has faith in the stability of the lightning of the city of the clouds will cling to this body as true.

The infant child is in a helpless condition. He cannot convey his ideas. He is mute. He eats dust and offal. He cries for nothing. He is ignorant. This period is ever attended with danger from fire,. Water, etc. He is easily irritated. How can senseless childhood be said to be happy state of life?

In youth man is a slave of lust. His mind is filled with evil thoughts. He commits various sorts of vices in delusion. His face is disfigured by passion.

Even at the best the charm of youth fades away like lightning, very rapidly. The foolish man who ignorantly rejoices at his transient youth, is considered as a human beast. He comes to repent of his folly

in a short time. It is very rare to find a young man who is humble, who spends his time in the company and service of sages, who is sympathetic and merciful and who is endowed with virtuous qualities. He who has overcome all obstacles of youth and has attained knowledge of the Self while young is fit to be adored by all.

Sit down and think calmly and honestly what beauty is there in a woman whose body is composed of flesh, bones, nerves, fat, marrow and blood?

Where is the beauty in the same woman when she becomes old? Look at the condition of the eyes, the body, of a woman after an attack of fever for seven days! What is the state of her beauty? Where is the beauty if she does not take bath for a week? The stink is abominable. Look at the senile woman aged 85 who is sitting at the corner, with rotten eyes, shrunken cheeks and skin! Analyse the parts of a woman, realise their true nature. Woman is the greatest cause of delusion. Women are the flames of vice. They are burning fire which destroys man like a dry straw. They burn from a long distance, so they are more dangerous than fire. The lovely damsel is like a poisonous drug that destroys life by causing lustful intoxication and clouding the power of discrimination. This mysterious world began with woman and has woman for its sustenance. How, without renunciation of woman is it possible to attain the eternal Bliss of Brahman? The bodies of those beautiful damsels who are so much fondled by foolish men are taken to cemetery after their Pranas depart. Beasts and worms feed upon their flesh. Jackals and kites tear off their skin. Without renunciation of woman, it is impossible to have Self-realisation.

Old age withers the body and drives away its beauty. The old man is treated with contempt by the members of his own family. He is in a helpless condition. His senses become powerless. He cannot gratify his desires. His memory is gone. He suffers from various incurable diseases. But the desire for enjoyments he has no capacity to enjoy, is insatiable. Desires burn his heart but he is powerless to gratify them. Old age is inescapable in this world in spite of all gland-graftings. What is the good of this miserable mundane life which is subject to such changes and decay?

The Fleeting Nature of Things

Time is the rat that cuts off the thread of lire in this universe. There is nothing in this world which the all-devouring time will spare. Time spares not even the greatest person for a moment. Time pervades and controls all things. Time dances about with a long chain of the bones of the dead hanging from its neck to its feet. It assumes the formidable form of a burning fire during the dissolution and reduces the whole world to ashes. Nothing can stop its course. Man grieves for his folly at the time of death. The same body which is clothed today in silk and decorated with garlands is to be burnt to ashes tomorrow. Just as the frog that is hanging in a serpent's throat, is yet desirous of eating flies, even so men of the world are desirous of enjoying the worldly objects although they are being swallowed by the serpent of time. You see others dying and growing old, yet you never wake up from your own dream of the vanity of worldly life. If God has not covered this filthy body with the skin,

Will it not be eaten away by crows and eagles? The filth that comes out of our nose, mouth, ears, and anus causes extreme disgust in us. Would it be possible for us to take food if we were to see the filth that is inside our body? Will not germs begin to manifest if the filth of the body is not washed for three days? Can this obnoxious smell which has permeated the body from toenail to the top of the head be removed by application of saffron, sandal-paste, refined camphor, scents, etc.? Is he not a fool who

takes too much care of the body? Do they not who delighted to look at the body sitting on the throne of kings, shudder to lock at it when life is snatched away by Death?

The three entrances to the city of perdition are lust, wealth and tongue. He who has conquered these three need not be afraid of death. He has no enemies, who rides on the horse of discrimination with the sword of dispassion and the shield of endurance.

Application of soap to the body, oil to the hair, powder to the face, looking into the mirror a thousand and one times a day, wearing rings on the fingers-these and many like these will intensify your attachment to the body. Therefore give up all these things ruthlessly.

A big boil is washed with lotion. Then boric ointment is applied. Then bandage is put on. Even so, this nasty body is a very big boil. It is washed every day. Food is thrust into it. This is the ointment. Cloth is worn. This is the bandage. Sannyasins treat this body as a very big boil or wound with an oozing discharge. But the body is worshipped by worldly-minded persons on account of delusion and infatuation.

There Is Only Suffering in This World

Birth is suffering; disease is suffering; death is suffering; sorrow, grief, pain, lamentations are suffering; union with unpleasant objects is suffering; separation from the beloved objects is suffering; unsatisfied desires are suffering. O man! Is there any real pleasure or happiness in this world? Why do you cling to these mundane objects? Why do you stroll about here and there like a street-dog in search of happiness in this earth-plane? Search within. Look within and introspect and rest in the Supreme Abode of Peace and Immortality now. Never delay a second even. Plod on. March forward. Realise now and be free.

Pain is the lot of deluded beings. Even the little pleasure that is experienced here is obtained after a lot of worry and troubles and is productive of much suffering. It is born in pain and ends in tears. Gratification of sensual pleasures only augments the craving.

Lust invariably leads to extreme suffering on the impediment of senses in old age.

Nobody has been benefited in this world by this Maya. People invariably weep in the end. Ask any grown-up householder whether he has got an iota of happiness in this world.

The worldly man never comes to the senses although he gets severe knocks, kicks and blows from different corners. The strolling street-dog never stops visiting the houses even though pelted with stones every time.

The whole world is a ball of fire though there are the so-called charming sceneries of Mayaic illusion. The whole world is a huge furnace wherein all living creatures are being roasted.

Lord Buddha says: “On the whole, life is a sorrow.” Patanjali Maharshi in his Yoga Sutras says: “Sarvam Duhkham Vivekinah”-“All indeed is pain to a person of discrimination.” Just as a fish in its desire to eat flesh does not see the hook that lies beneath, so also man in his passionate desire to get sensual pleasure does not see the noose of death.

Pleasure is not in the objects; it is in the imagination or inclination of the mind. Mango is not sweet but imagination makes it sweet. Woman is not beautiful, but imagination renders her so. An ugly woman

appears very beautiful to her husband because his imagination is beautiful. There is a grain of pleasure in objects, but the pain that is mixed with it is of the size of a big mountain.

Sensual pleasure is tantalising. There is enchantment so long as man does not possess the desired object. The moment he is in possession of the object, the charm vanishes. He finds that he is in an entanglement. The rich but childless man thinks he will be more happy by getting a son; he worries himself day and night to get a son, goes on pilgrimage to Ramesvaram and Kasi and performs various religious ceremonies. But when he gets a child, he feels miserable. The child suffers from epileptic fits, and his money is given away to doctors. Even then there is no cure. This is Mayaic jugglery. The whole world is fraught with temptation.

The cause of pain is love of pleasure. The cause of death is love of sensual life. Death is a horrible thing to him who is intensely attached to sensual life. Words like cremation, murder, death, corpse, burial, make the sensualist shudder at heart; for he is extremely attached to the body and the objects of the senses. “How to part with the sensual objects?” is his great cause of misery. Pity!

Pleasure Is Purely Illusive

Wealth and power promise to give you physical comforts, but they never give. They delude you and entangle you in the meshes of Samsara. They make you slaves. They shut out for you the doors of the illimitable domain of everlasting peace and the eternal bliss of the Atman. They have no value at all for the dispassionate aspirants. They kick them ruthlessly as mere bits of straw or broken glass-pieces. But they appear to be highly valuable in the eyes of the worldly-minded. They are their be-all and end-all. They spend their whole lives in the pursuit of these fleeting, worthless shadows.

This world is a play of colours and sounds. This sense-universe is a play of nerves. It is a false show kept up by the jugglery of Maya, mind and senses. You enjoy the sensual pleasures for a period of twenty years when the senses are young and strong. What is this short evanescent period of twenty years in eternity? What is this despicable, jarring, monotonous, sensual life when compared with the eternal and peaceful life in the immortal Self within?

You are always helpless. Why do you boast of your ability, capacity, independence and freedom? Why are you proud and egoistic?

One anna of pleasure is mixed with fifteen annas of pain. Pleasure that is mixed with pain and fear is no pleasure at all. If you begin to analyse this one anna of pleasure you will find that it is no pleasure at all. It is mere play or delusion of the mind. Milk gives pleasure to some and pain to others. Milk brings on retching in fever. The third cup of milk induces vomiting. What is this? This is play of Maya. This is Indrajala of Avidya Sakti. The Indriyas and the mind are deceiving you at every moment. Beware! Wake up! Open your eyes. Develop Viveka. If you suffer from cancer of the stomach, can you enjoy Rasagulla and other sweets, even though you are a multi-millionaire? The doctor will put you on a diet of pepper water only. If your wife dies, you are drowned in sorrow. You cannot expect happiness from finite, perishable objects that are conditioned in time, space and causation. Nitya, Nirupadhika, Niratisaya, Ananda, eternal, independent, infinite Bliss can only be had in the Atman that is hidden in your heart. Search, understand and realise the Atman within.

To wear spectacles at the age of ten, to wear ring, watch, to buy a car by borrowing money, to wear fashionable dinner-uniform and Ellwood hat, health boots, to have a French crop or bobbed hair, to smoke Three Castles or Navy-Cut cigarettes or Manila cigars, to constrict the neck with stiff collars, to walk along the beach with their wives in clasped hands, to have newspaper in their pocket, to have a trimmed or Kaiser-moustache at the middle of the upper lip, to take meat and drink brandy, to play bridge, to gamble, to dance in ball-rooms, to borrow money, to go to talkies, and in short, to lead a life of dissipation-this is modern civilisation! Fashion and style have made you beggar of beggars.

The body appears only in the present. A thing that has neither past nor future must be considered as non-existent in the present also. If you think over this matter more deeply with Suddha-Buddhi or pure intellect, you will find Atyanta-Abhava or complete non-existence of the world.

“Nothing on this earth belongs to me! This body even is not mine.” This is true wisdom. “He is my son. She is my daughter. She is my wife. That bungalow is mine. I am rich. I am a Kshatriya. I am a Brahmin. I am lean. I am fat.” This is foolishness of a superior order. This physical body is the rightful property of fishes, jackals and vultures. How can you call this as yours?

This Disgraceful Modern Age

In this scientific era-the age of the so-called modern civilisation-greed, passion, selfishness are increasing day by day, nay, hour by hour. One nation wants to devour another nation. Man has lost his manliness. The son drags his father to the courts for the division of property. The wife divorces her husband and marries another, if he happens to be more rich, more beautiful and younger. The younger brother poisons his elder brother to take possession of the estate. You see cruelty, dishonesty, injustice and atrocity everywhere. No one keeps his promise. The father has no faith in the son. The wife has no faith in the husband and vice versa.

There is no end for craving (Trishna) in the life of a worldly man. That is the reason why a worldly man is ever restless despite his wealth and comforts. There is always dissatisfaction with his lot. He is ever discontented. Before one craving is satisfied another craving is ready to occupy his mind, and this craving agitates the mind and makes a constant demand for gratification. He forgets his real divine nature and plunges himself in the ocean of Samsara (worldliness).

Give a good scrubbing to a pig with Pears soap and a nice bath. Place it on a soft mattress and give it nice dishes to eat. It will not eat. It will immediately run away to eat filth. Even so, if you place the worldly-minded persons in the company of saints, Yogins and Sannyasins, in solitary places with charming sceneries, they can never live in peace. They will feel as if they are fish taken out of water. They will feel like the pig that is placed on the mattress.

Sages compare a worldly-minded man to a street-dog, or a pig that eats filth, or a worm that revels in rubbish. The comparison is very very apt, indeed!

O worldly-minded persons! Wake up from the deep of dark ignorance! Open your eyes now. Stand up and acquire knowledge of the Self. Approach the Brahmanishtha Guru. Attain Absolute Independence or Kaivalya. Merge yourself in the State of Satchidananda.

A worldly man kills himself by clinging to things unreal. That man who does not struggle to attain Self-realisation, although he possesses knowledge of the scriptures, human body, youth, energy and other

conveniences, commits suicide. His lot is very miserable. What greater fool is there than this man who neglects the goal of life? That man who does not care to make enquiry of who am I?' what is the goal?' 'how to attain the goal?' is really a great fool, although he may be endowed with high secular knowledge.

Imagine for a moment that your skin and flesh are inverted and exposed. Then some one will have to stand always with a long hill-stick to drive off crows and jackals. Why do you have Moha (infatuated love) for this dirty body? Why do you apply perfumes? Are you not a big fool? Get Jnana. You are the Atman, ever Pure and Effulgent.

The body is the first Mayaic knot or tie. Wife is the second knot round the neck. Son is the third knot round the waist. Daughter is the fourth knot round the knee. Grandson is the fifth knot round the ankle. He who has cut asunder these knots or ties and who has no Moha is really a strong and powerful man (Dhira) and not one who can allow a motor car to pass on his chest or who can keep a big stone on his chest, or who has first-class magisterial powers or who has double-barrelled gun, or who is a member of the Parliament.

All hopes of happiness in this world terminate in pain, despair and sorrow. Pleasure is mixed with pain. Beauty is mixed with ugliness. Kindness is mixed with anger and harsh words. There is no real prop in this world to lean upon. Sensual indulgence brings disease, exhaustion, weakness, and loss of vigour. The sensual objects destroy the whole man, and he has no help from any quarter of this earth. Fair sex infatuates. Money and power fill the mind with hollowness and vanity! There is often war between nations. There is no peace anywhere. Trust not this illusory world.

The musk-deer does not know that the fragrance of musk is emanating from its own navel. It wanders about here and there to find out the source of this smell. Even so, the deluded, ignorant Jiva is not aware that the fountain of bliss is within himself in the Atman. He is running after external, perishable objects to get happiness.

The rich man who is deluded by his wealth cannot enter the Kingdom of God. That is the reason why Lord Jesus said to a young ruler: "Go, sell what you have and give to the poor if you would follow me." Hoarding money is a great sin. The whole wealth of this world belongs to the Lord. Greed for wealth opens the doors of dark hell.

Every desire that is conquered, every thought that is quelled, every Indriya that is subdued, every weakness that is removed will add new strength, develop will-power and will take you one step nearer to the Goal.

Even Indra, the Lord of the Devas, who is rolling in abundant wealth, cannot enjoy that bliss which comes to a sage who has the self-centred mind free from desires, who is resting in his own Svarupa, who has equal vision for all.

Go wherever you may, to Gulmarg or Pahalgaon in Kashmir, to Darjeeling or Simla, to Vienna or the Alps. It is all the same. You will not find any real rest. The charming scenery may soothe the retina for a second. Raga, Dvesha, jealousy. Passion and greed are everywhere. You will find the same earth, the same sky, the same air and the same water. And you carry with you the same mind. Imagination and change of places have deceived not a few. Remember! The Lord is within you. He is seated in the heart of all beings. Whatever you see, hear, touch or feel is God. Therefore, hate not anybody, cheat not

anybody, harm not anybody. Love all and be one with all. Man! Be contented. Live wisely, Meditate on the Inner Self, the Atman. Here you will find ever-lasting Peace and Bliss!

Worldly Man! Wake Up!

O man! Even a broken needle will not follow you when you die. Your actions only-good or bad –will follow you. Why, then, do you waste your time and energy in hoarding up wealth? Give up this constant selfish struggle of life in this world.

Your face is beautiful, but your heart is as hard as flint. You have not cultivated mercy. You are greedy, cunning, passionate, cruel and jealous. Make it soft as butter by doing constant selfless service, by giving charity to the poor and the forlorn, and by practice of regular meditation, effected by renunciation of all desires for the objects of the world.

Friends! Is there not a higher mission in life than eating, sleeping, drinking and talking? Is there not any higher form of eternal bliss than these and similar transitory and illusory pleasures? Is there not a more dignified life than this sensual life here? How uncertain is life! How insecure is our existence on this earth-plane with various kinds of fear? How painful is this mundane existence! Should you not attempt diligently now to reach a place the immortal abode-your original sweet home of pristine glory and divine splendour, where there is eternal sunshine, absolute security, perfect peace and where there is neither disease nor fear?

O followers of the philosophy of the flesh! Give up this clinging to the body. Give up clinging to wife and children. Try to know the Inner, Immortal Lord, who dwells in, who is the Inner Ruler! Who knows everything, but whom you do not know because of ignorance, by whom the senses and the intellect are illumined. Do not mistake the transient body for the Immortal, changeless, self-luminous Atman.

What is this sense-universe? If the nerve of taste, the glasso-pharyngeal, gets paralysed, you cannot enjoy the different kinds of palatable dishes. If your retina or optic nerve is paralysed, you cannot enjoy the diverse beautiful forms. If the auditory nerve is paralysed, you cannot hear melodious music. If the olfactory nerve is paralysed, you cannot enjoy the various kinds of sweet fragrances. If your sensory nerve of the hands is paralysed, you cannot enjoy soft things. If the nerve erigens is paralysed, you cannot enjoy conjugal bliss. Do you not clearly see now that this world is a mere play of nerves? Do you not understand that this universe of opposites is illusory? You will have to depend upon these nerves for your happiness in this fleeting world of names and forms. If these nerves go out of order, you become miserable even though you possess enormous wealth and palatial buildings. Can you call as real, lasting happiness these little, illusory, sensual pleasures which depend upon the play of nerves ? It is mere itching of nerves only, which tickles those deluded souls who have lost their power of discrimination and understanding.

An ignorant worldly man says: “I have to do my duties. I have to educate my four sons and three daughters. I have to please my boss. I have got heavy duties in the office. I have to remit money to my widowed sister. I have a large family. I have six brothers and five sisters. Where is the time for me to do Sandhya Vandana and Japa and study religious books? There is no time for breathing even. I have no leisure. Even on holidays I have to work. Even on Sundays I have to worry myself with work. I bring office-papers to my house and work at night till the small hours of the morning. I do not want Yoga. This office-work and the maintenance of my family is itself a great duty or Yoga.”

Do you call this duty? It is mere slavery. It is the work of a coolie. It is mere bondage. The man is in fear at every moment. Even in dreams he meets his office-mates and the boss and posts figures in the ledger. This is not a right sense of duty. He takes tea, eats food, and sits at the table for writing, sleeps and procreates. His whole life passes away like this. This is not duty. This is gross delusion. This is foolishness. This is selfishness. This is work for gain and satisfaction of lower appetites. Anything done under compulsion and expectation of paralysed, you cannot enjoy the various kinds of sweet fragrances. If your sensory nerve of the hands is paralysed, you cannot enjoy soft things. If the nerve erigens is paralysed, you cannot enjoy conjugal bliss. Do you not clearly see now that this world is a mere play of nerves? Do you not understand that this universe of opposites is illusory? You will have to depend upon these nerves for your happiness in this fleeting world of names and forms. If these nerves go out of order, you become miserable even though you possess enormous wealth and palatial buildings. Can you call as real, lasting happiness these little, illusory, sensual pleasures which depend upon the play of nerves? It is mere itching of nerves only, which tickles those deluded souls who have lost their power of discrimination and understanding.

An ignorant worldly man says: “I have to do my duties. I have to educate my four sons and three daughters. I have to please my boss. I have got heavy duties in the office. I have to remit money to my widowed sister. I have a large family. I have six brothers and five sisters. Where is the time for me to do Sandhya Vandana and Japa and study religious books? There is no time for breathing even. I have no leisure. Even on holidays I have to work. Even on Sundays I have to worry myself with work. I bring office-papers to my house and work at night till the small hours of the morning. I do not want Yoga. This office-work and the maintenance of my family is itself a great duty or Yoga.”

Do you call this duty? It is mere slavery. It is the work of a coolie. It is mere bondage. The man is in fear at every moment. Even in dreams he meets his office-mates and the boss and posts figures in the ledger. This is not a right sense of duty. He takes tea, eats food, and sits at the table for writing, sleeps and procreates. His whole life passes away like this. This is not duty. This is gross delusion. This is foolishness. This is selfishness. This is work for gain and satisfaction of lower appetites. Anything done under compulsion and expectation of rewards is not duty. You must not take as duty works done from attachment, greed or passion.

In the presence of light you cannot have darkness. In the presence of sensual pleasures, Atmic Bliss cannot exist. Worldlings want sensual pleasures and Atmic Bliss at the same time, in one and the same cup. This is an absolute impossibility. They cannot give up worldly, sensual pleasures. They cannot have real Vairagya in their heart of hearts. They will talk a lot. Worldly men are happy because they get a few ginger biscuits, some money and woman. What more is wanted for them, poor creatures? More beggars are brought forth in the world through lust. All worldly pleasures appear as nectar in the beginning but become virulent poison in the end. When one gets entangled in married life, he can hardly break the different ties of Moha. A bachelor full of passion imagines that he is unhappy and miserable because he is unmarried. Give up clinging to this illusory life. Be fearless. Control the Indriyas (senses) and the mind. You will develop Vairagya. You will be perfectly established in Brahmacharya.

You have travelled in many countries, fed your dear relatives, and amassed immense wealth. Yet, of what avail are these, O friend? You have not realised the Blissful Brahman.

Desire for name and fame, infatuated love for the body, desire for vast erudition, are stumbling blocks in the attainment of the Self-knowledge. He who wants to free himself from Samsara should annihilate the desire for these mundane things.

Who is wife? Who is son? Who are you? Wherefrom did you come? How wonderful is this universe? How are you related to one another? Think deeply on all these points.

Who are you? Who am I? Wherefrom have we come? Who is mother? Who is father? Think deeply in these. Leave off this world, which is a dream, and seek the One, Eternal, Undivided Essence of Brahman.

There are on the whole 84 lakhs of creatures as germs, insects, reptiles, birds, quadrupeds, bipeds and human beings. Human birth is attained only after passing through all the lower births. Even men of vast erudition waste their time without making enquiry into the nature of the Self, in spite of their having obtained this hard-to-be-attained human birth in a good family on account of virtuous deeds.

Friends! Is there any limit to the number of fathers, mothers, wives, sons, daughters, uncles and aunts you have had in the countless incarnations in the past? And yet the clinging to these false relationships has not gone. Discrimination has not yet dawned. What a great pity it is!

The attraction for external objects ceases; but there yet remains the internal craving or sense hankering or thirsting, which is called Trishna. That is why the Gita says: “The objects of the senses (but not the relish for them) turn away from an abstemious dweller in the body, and even the relish turneth away from him after the Supreme is seen” (Ch. II-59). T

What lessons have you learnt from the Bihar and Quetta earthquakes? Are you attempting to reach the Imperishable Seat wherein all desires and Trishnas will be utterly annihilated? Are you endeavouring to attain the highest end of life?

In the Bihar earthquake a rich banker had to beg for nine rupees just to protect himself and his family from death by starvation. A Pundit had earned slowly twenty-five thousand rupees by selling his books. But he had to spend that money in a short time in the treatment of his chronic chest complaint. He tried all sorts of medicines, but all in vain. He had to leave the house and lead the life of a hermit. How uncertain and foolish is life in this world!

You have spent eight hours in sleep, and the rest of the day in idle gossiping, telling lies, deceiving others, in selfish activities, in amassing wealth. How can you expect spiritual good, how can you expect immortality and peace, if you do not spend even half an hour in the service of the Lord, in singing His names and in divine contemplation?

Will your son or daughter or friend or relative help you, when you are about to die? Will they accompany you to share your miseries? Have you got one sincere, unselfish friend in all this world? All are selfish! There is no pure love. But that Lord, your real Friend of friends, Father of fathers, who dwells in your heart, will never forsake you, though you may forget Him. Adore Him in silence, that God of gods, that Divinity of divinities, the Highest of the high. May He bless you with His Love, Wisdom, Power and Peace!

Follow the Wise

The Rishis and the Seers tapped the source through living the Truth. They had deep penetration into the Truth through the eye of wisdom or intuition in Nirvikalpa Samadhi. They did rigorous Tapas and intense meditation. They disciplined the outgoing senses and led a virtuous life. They were absolutely moral and righteous. They developed all the qualities of the heart. They practised dispassion and renunciation. They had no attachment for mundane things. They kicked off ruthlessly all wealth, relatives, wife, family, children, position and status. They embraced poverty, purity and austerity. They lived in forests. They ate fruits and roots. They breathed pure air. They lived on the banks of the Ganga amidst Himalayan scenery, which had, and has, high spiritual vibrations. They did not live in Mount Road or the Mall.

Desirelessness is the flower-bunch in the tree of contentment and quiescence. Desirelessness is the axe with which the forest of this Samsara is cut down. A desireless man is totally free from all weakness of the heart. For a man of absolute desirelessness the whole universe is but a straw,

You cannot practise Yoga living in the Wall Street or Piccadilly or Esplanade, Mount Road or the Mall, breathing the contaminated air of these places, eating unnatural, heavy foods, attending cinemas, theatres and ball-rooms, wasting much vital energy, with nerves under high tension and with ears dinned by the sounds of motor cars and machinery.

In enjoyment there is fear of disease; in social position, the fear of falling off; in wealth, the fear of enemies; in honour, the fear of humiliation; in power, the fear of foes; in beauty, the fear of old age; in scriptural erudition, the fear of opponents; in virtue the fear of traducers; in body, the fear of death. All the things of this world pertaining to men are attended with fear; renunciation alone stands for fearlessness.

Shun honour, respect, degrees, name, fame, power, position and titles. They are absolutely worthless. They will not give you eternal satisfaction. They will only intensify your vanity. They are all intoxicants of the mind. They bring misery and mental disturbance. That is the reason why Raja Bhartrihari, Raja Gopichand and Lord Buddha gave up kingdoms, riches, honour and fame.

In the Bhagavadgita you will find: “Humility, unpretentiousness, harmlessness, forgiveness, rectitude, service of the teacher, purity, steadfastness, self-control, dispassion towards the objects of the senses, and also absence of egoism, insight into the pain and evil of birth, death, old age and sickness, unattachment, absence of self-identification with son, wife, or home, and constant balance of mind in wished-for and unwished-for events, unflinching devotion to Me by Yoga, without other objects, resort to sequestered places, absence of enjoyment in the company of men, constancy in the wisdom of the Self, understanding the object of essential wisdom; that is declared to be real Wisdom; all else is ignorance” (Ch. XIII: 8-12).

“Demoniacal men know neither right energy, nor right abstinence; nor purity, nor even propriety; nor is truth in them. The whole universe is without Truth, without basis,’ they say, ‘without a God, brought about by mutual union, and caused by lust and nothing else.’ Holding this view, these ruined selves of small understanding, of fierce deeds, come forth as enemies for the destruction of the world. Surrendering themselves to insatiable desires, possessed with vanity, conceit and arrogance, holding evil ideas through delusion, they engage in action with impure resolves. Giving themselves over to unmeasured thought whose end is death, regarding the gratification of desires as the highest, feeling

sure that this is all, held in bondage by a hundred ties of expectation, given over to lust and anger, they strive to obtain by unlawful means hoards of wealth for sensual enjoyments" (Ch. XVI: 7-12).

In the Vishnupurana it is said: "If the deluded fool loves the body, a mere collection of flesh, blood, pus, faeces, urine, muscles, fat and bones, he will verily love hell itself! To him who is not disgusted with the nasty smell from his body, what other argument need be abduced for detachment?" It is needless and useless to say more.

All men and all buildings will be destroyed in the twinkling of an eye if only a dreadful epidemic is to break out or an earthquake to shake up the earth without mercy. Yet people want to build bungalows in Simla and Mussoorie and attain Immortality there! How foolish these people are! Poor self-deluded souls! Pitiable is their lot! They are earthworms only as they revel in filth. I pray for them. May God bestow on all Viveka, Vairagya and devotion! May all attain soon Eternal Bliss and Perennial Joy!

Chapter XII

STORIES AND FORMULAE

VEDANTIC STORIES

Prince or Fisherman?

A prince is sailing in a ship. He is the royal heir to a great kingdom. His father is a great emperor. The ship is caught in a cyclone and dashed upon a rock and through shipwreck all perish and only this prince clings on to a wood and he is washed ashore to an unknown land where no one knows him, and the land is strange and he is penniless, and starvation has made him ill, and some fisherman takes pity on him and takes him into the fishermen's colony and nurses him back to health, and after sometime he gains strength and becomes a part and parcel of the fishermen's colony. He has completely forgotten everything about his former state. He has got but faint memories of his previous life in the palace, but he knows nothing more of the palace. In this way he grows up as a fisherman, putting up with all the hardships of a fisherman's life. And then searchers have been sent by the king and these searchers are the saints, the children of God, and the spiritual books, and the Jiva is the ship-wrecked prince which has forgotten its home. From a state of plenitude it has come to the position of beggary, ill-fed, sometimes starving. Searchers are going country after country but who can recognise the prince among millions of people? Such a condition is the condition of Jiva. Ultimately someone manages to contact the prince after years of searching and he is one who is intimate with the emperor, who knows certain birth-marks on the prince through which he can identify the prince without any fear of error, and he happens to come across this boy and he recognises him and informs him that he was a prince, heir to a royal heritage. But attachment has grown between him and the fishermen and he cannot entertain the idea of leaving his foster-mother and foster-father. He declines to leave the fishermen. But the searcher tries to convince him. This is the process that takes place when the Guru tells the Jiva that "Your real nature is bliss. Unlimited wealth is yours." But the Jiva is attached to this miserable existence. So, Guru has to wean the aspirant from the state of forgetfulness and then when the prince gets convinced by the knowledge given by the searcher, then a struggle comes. He has to make efforts to break attachment and if he has to get back his lost heritage, he has to go back, and this going back is called Sadhana.

The Distant Inheritance

This brings about one more aspect of the previous story. There is a man in utter poverty. With great difficulty he is carrying out his living. He is in a certain country, and when he is in this condition, a multimillionaire has been travelling and somehow he came in contact with this person in a passing manner, and that man of unlimited wealth leaves in his will his entire fortune to this man as a legacy and he says in his will that this man has to come to the place where the rich man was living and establish his identity and claim this fortune, and he also says where the man is to whom he is leaving the will. Then the rich man dies and the solicitors who have got the will in their hands, send word to the poor man that he has to come there and get the wealth. News reaches him, "You are the richest man in the world. You have inherited unlimited wealth and unlimited property." By cable this news is sent to him and he reads

it, “You are the richest man in the world.” Now this man knows that he is a multimillionaire. So he will have no wants. He can buy anything that he wants. But at the moment he is actually penniless. He has to work hard for his livelihood. In his present condition he cannot get bread by merely saying that he is the richest man. Yet, undeniably it is a fact that he is the richest man, though he is not able to make use of his wealth. We are Nitya Suddha Atman. But if a mosquito bites us we get shivering and have to go to a hospital and take quinine. Yet, it is the real fact that we are Satchidananda Atman. This fact is true at all times. But practically it is of no use. We are unable to make use of it, because our condition is such.

Now what he has to do? Suppose the place where he has to reach in order to claim the will is 15,000 miles away. Now he has to work hard to meet his expenses of travel. Nobody will trust him and advance him money, simply because he says that he is the richest man in the world. He has to work hard and earn his passage-money. It may take him six months or even two years. And then he has to purchase the ticket and undertake the trouble and face all the hazards in the travel, and when he actually reaches the place and proves his identity, the fact of his being wealthy becomes turned into a concrete, practical, effective, living fact. Fact is there always. Even before he reached the place where he has to claim his wealth, he is the richest man. Similarly even now the fact is there that we are the Satchidananda Atman. But if the self-same fact has to become a vibrant, thrilling and vital experience and fully effective, “sword cannot pierce me, wind cannot dry me, water cannot moisten me,” all these things have to be demonstrated as an actual fact. Therefore, the necessity for doing Sadhana. Sadhana is

The claiming of the wealth on the actual spot. Unless this is done, the fact of his being wealthy is useless to him. That is the condition of the Jiva, who is in full possession of the knowledge that he is the richest man. Such knowledge is useless to him until the condition of the will is fulfilled, and what is the will? It is that you are deathless, eternal, immortal Atman, the Light of lights. You are that from which countless universes arise. That

Is the ultimate will and God Himself has given this will, and if we have to make this knowledge a vital experience, what are the conditions to be fulfilled? Doing hard labour, earning passage-money, and undertaking the journey and reaching there is the condition to be fulfilled. What is that? That is Yoga or Sadhana and everything that Yoga implies.

The Parable of the Millionaire’s Son

There was once a multimillionaire with unlimited wealth. He had an only child, a little baby son. The millionaire left all his wealth to the little boy who became the sole possessor of the entire huge fortune. So even at the little age of a year or so this tiny boy was a great multimillionaire. He was the possessor of a vast fortune. He had no need of anything at all. He himself was the owner of all the wealth. This was his real status.

But then what was his actual condition for all practical purposes? Let us see. Though it was true that the little boy was a multimillionaire yet all the same the boy was not in a position to enjoy the fact of his multimillionaireship in practical effect because of a number of things. Firstly as he was only a minor in age he could not utilise his status due to certain prevailing laws of inheritance. He had to attain the age of a major and then alone into active, effective and de facto ownership of his vast wealth and the status this wealth would give him. He was therefore subject to the operation of the law and WAS under the control of his guardian who was in charge until the boy attained the proper age of majority. Thus this

multimillionaire had to obey the guardian and try to please him if he wished any of his special desires to be fulfilled. Secondly, the father had laid down certain specific conditions to be fulfilled by the boy if he was to get the fortune when he reached the age of majority, i.e., 18 years or 21 years as the law of the land required it. If he failed to fulfil these conditions then he was not eligible to the fortune.

Let us take for example that the father laid down in his will that the son would receive the fortune when he attained majority only on condition that he never smoked, drank wine, gambled or did anything that was disgraceful to the fair name of the family, etc., etc. Now we see that even though it is a fact that the boy is a multimillionaire and no one can deny this fact nor no one can alter it yet all the same at the particular juncture until the boy has fulfilled all the conditions required by the Law as well as the father's will the mere fact of his being a multimillionaire (however true and real that it may be) does not in any way free him from his present limitations nor place him above from all wants. If he wants to experience that state when he is not at all in need of any thing whatsoever then he has to patiently wait till he grows up and also take care to fulfil the several conditions laid down by his father in his will. Then alone he will ultimately realise the full state of plenty and power and independence.

But before he has actually done this if he tries to act on the strength of his status he will find that will not succeed. If he orders for a motor car for 10,000 dollars the dealer will only smile but nothing will come out of it. But the guardian can make a purchase on the heir's behalf. The heir cannot do it though he is himself the real owner of the wealth. Is this not a very peculiar state of affairs really?

Similarly, even though you are in reality Satchidananda, Absolute Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, you have to realise to fulfil all the conditions (viz., cultivation of virtues and eradication of vices) and undergo all the preparatory exercises like concentration, meditation, etc.

Formulae for Nirguna Meditation

Asangoham-I am unattached. Om Om Om

Achintyoham-I am unthinkable Om Om Om

Ajoham-I am unborn Om Om Om

Ajaroham-I am without decay Om Om Om

Akartaham-I am non-doer Om Om Om

Abhoktaham-I am non-enjoyer Om Om Om

Aksharoham-I am imperishable Om Om Om

Agrahyoham-I am ungraspable Om Om Om

Achyutoham-I am changeless Om Om Om

Anantoham-I am infinite Om Om Om

Advaitoham-I am one without a second Om Om Om

Anamayoham-I am diseaseless Om Om Om

Atindriyoham-I am beyond the senses Om Om Om

Amaroham-I am immortal Om Om Om

Avyayoham-I am inexhaustible Om Om Om

Avyapadesyoham-I am indescribable Om Om Om

Aprameyoham I am immeasurable Om Om Om

Avangmanogochroham-I am unattainable by speech and mind Om Om Om

Akhandaikarasa-chinmatroham-I am the one undivided essence of consciousness alone Om Om Om

Antaratmaham-I am the inner Self Om Om Om

Paramatmaham-I am the supreme Self Om Om Om

Paripurnoham-I am all-full Om Om Om

Nityoham-I am eternal Om Om Om

Suddhoham-I am pure Om Om Om

Siddhoham-I am perfect Om Om Om

Buddhoham-I am awakened Om Om Om

Muktoham-I am liberated Om Om Om

Nityabodhasvarupoham-I am of the nature of eternal knowledge Om Om Om

Nityatriptisvarupoham-I am of the nature of eternal satisfaction Om Om Om

Nityavijnanasvarupoham-I am of the nature of eternal wisdom Om Om Om

Nityamuktasvarupoham-I am of the nature of eternal freedom Om Om Om

Bhumanandasvarupoham-I am of the nature of infinite bliss Om Om Om

Niralamboham-I am without any other support Om Om Om

Nirvikaroham-I am without modification Om Om Om

Nirviseshoham-I am without particularities Om Om Om

Nirbhayoham-I am without fear Om Om Om

Nishkriyoham-I am without action Om Om Om

Nirgunoham-I am without attributes Om Om Om

Nirakaroham-I am without shape Om Om Om

Nirmaloham-I am without impurity Om Om Om

Niranjanoham-I am spotless Om Om Om

Nirvisesha-chinmatroham-I am the unlimited consciousness alone Om Om Om

Nishkaloham-I am without parts Om Om Om

Nirvikalpoham-I am without mental modifications Om Om Om

Niramsoham I am without divisions or limbs Om Om Om

Desatitoham-I am transcending space Kalatitoham-I am transcending time Om Om Om

Desakalavastuparichhedarahitoham- Om Om Om

I am without the differentiations of space, time and individuality Om Om Om

Trigunatitoham-I am above the three qualities of Prakriti Om Om Om

Dvandvatitoham-I am above the pairs of opposites Om Om Om

Mayatitoham I am above Maya Om Om Om

Matrimanameyatitoham-I am above knower, knowledge and known Om Om Om

Nadabindukalatitoham-I am above Nada, Bindu and Kala Om Om Om

Turiyatitoham-I am above Turiya. Om Om Om

Sarvatitoham-I am above all things Om Om Om

Dvaita-advaita-vihinoham-I am without duality and non-duality Om Om Om

Bandhamuktivihinoham-I am without bondage and liberation Om Om Om

Adimadhyantahinoham-I am without beginning, middle and end Om Om Om

Karyakaranavarjitoham-I am different from cause and effect Om Om Om

Namarupavivarjitoham-I am free from name and form Om Om Om

Sadasadbhedarahitoham-I am without the difference of being and non-being Om Om Om

Sajatiya-vijatiya-svagata-bhedarahitoham -I am without the difference of genus, and without external or internal variety Om Om Om

Aparichhinnoham-I am without limitation Om Om Om

Akasavatsarvagatoham-I am all-pervading like the sky Om Om Om

Kevaloham-I am alone absolute Om Om Om

Kevala-asti-rupoham-I am the embodiment of meré existence Om Om Om

Prajnanaghanoham-I am the mass of knowledge Om Om Om

Vijnanaghanoham-I am the mass of wisdom Om Om Om

Chaitanyaghanoham-I am the mass of consciousness Om Om Om

Chidghanoham-I am the mass of sentience Om Om Om

Anandaghanoham-I am the mass of bliss Om Om Om

Sattamatroham-I am existence alone Om Om Om

Sattasamanyoham-I am existence-in-general Soham-I am He Om Om Om

Sivoham-I am Siva (auspicious, blissful) Om Om Om

Sivah Kevaloham-I am Siva, the Alone, the Absolute Om Om Om

Svayamjyotih svarupoham-I am the embodime of Self-effulgence Om Om Om

Svayamprakasoham-I am Self-luminous Om Om Om

Tejomayoham-I am All-brilliance Om Om Om

Jyotirmayoham-I am All-light Om Om Om

Jyotih svarupoham-I am the embodiment of effulgence Om Om Om

Chinmayoham-I am the embodiment of consciousness Om Om Om

Chinmatroham-I am consciousness alone Om Om Om

Chaitanyoham-I am consciousness Om Om Om

Kutasthoham-I am immutable (rock-seated) Om Om Om

Sasvatoham-I am everlasting Om Om Om

Svaradaham-I am Self-King Om Om Om

Veda-Vedanta-vedyoham-I am what is to be known through the Veda and Vedanta Om Om Om

Akhandananda-vigrahoham-I am the form of undivided bliss Om Om Om

Omkarasvarupoham-I am the embodiment of Omkara Om Om Om

Pratyagatmaham-I am the internal Self Pratyaktattvoham-I am the internal Reality Om Om Om

Parabrahmaham-I am the Supreme Brahman Om Om Om

Paramanandoham-I am the Supreme Bliss Chidakasalakshanoham-I am of the character of the ether of consciousness Om Om Om

Rasanam Rasatamoham-I am the best essence of all essences Om Om Om

Sarvadhishthanarupoham-I am of the form of th substratum of everything Om Om Om

Sarvasunyoham-I am devoid of everything Om Om Om

Sarvapurnoham-I am filled with everything Om Om Om

Nirvanasukharupoham-I am the embodiment of the bliss of Nirvana Om Om Om

Sarvatah Panipadoham-I am with hands and feet everywhere Om Om Om

Sarvatokshisiromukhoham-I am with eyes, heads and mouths everywhere Om Om Om

Sarvatahsrutimanaham-I am with ears everywhere Om Om Om

Prapanchopasamoham-I am the cessation of the appearance of the universe Om Om Om

Sariratraya-vilakshanoham-I am other than the three bodies Om Om Om

Panchakosa-vyatiriktoham-I am different from the five sheaths Om Om Om

Avasthatraya-sakshyaham-I am the Witness of the three states Om Om Om

Satchidananda-svarupoham-I am the embodiment of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Om Om Om

APPENDIX

PHILOSOPHY OF PROVERBS

Very often we run after the shadow, discarding the substance in the background. In the spiritual sense, this theory is the very root of bondage. Instead of seeking God and realising his oneness with Him, man runs after His shadow, the world. This is the cause of all misery on earth.

Even in the case of the meaning of the word 'God' itself we more often than not understand the 'shadow' rather than the real 'substance' that is God. We concentrate so much on this unreal thing that in course of time we lose consciousness of the existence of the real. In our admiration of the tree, we miss the grand spectacle of the wood!

This is true of our understanding of the scriptures, too. How often have not reformers had to thunder forth to antagonistic millions the true significance of the teachings of the Prophets and Saints and dispel the darkness of wrong notions that had covered up the essence! The origin of most of the religions of the world could be traced out to this sort of renaissance. The source was only one religion. In course of time, people of deluded understanding began to interpret its tenets variously and started forming parties. They split themselves into opposing camps, each owning to be the sole votaries of the real purport of the ancients' utterances. Then will arise a star who will dive deeper into the ocean of wisdom and bring out the pearl of Truth. Some will follow him; others will still strike the discordant note. The new Seer will get together a band of followers to propagate his teachings; and these will establish a new religion. And, so the game has gone on for ages!

Besides the scriptural teachings, all religions have had the 'sayings' of their prophets. These are also classed under proverbs, though these include other ideas. Those of the proverbs which have such a spiritual background have as much of deep, secret and mystical meaning as the scriptural utterances themselves. This makes the real idea which they wish to convey to be misconstrued by posterity; and often some nonsensical notes are sounded in a futile attempt to give a true rendering of this sublime music!

Let us take a few examples from the Tamil literature. There is a beautiful (and amusing as it has become nowadays) proverb which means: "When you see (the) dog, there is no stone; when you see (the) stone, there is no dog." This has come to be regarded as a remark made by someone in a light vein, or at least not in a very serious mood. The proverb is taken to convey what it literally does. A man is passing along the road in a village. Several dogs stroll about him. "What a pity!" he is made to think, "There are so many dogs all about me. How I wish there was a stone near at hand so that I could enjoy a throw at them!" During a pilgrimage the same man looks at beautiful, well-polished stones lining the banks of the Ganga; then he thinks, "What a pity, again! Here there are any number of the most lovely stones. But, not a dog to hit them with!" This is the interpretation of the vulgar proverb. Even the serious amongst humanity nowadays will at best interpret it to man that this proverb merely restates an old idea regarding earthly fortunes. Where money is most needed, it is usually absent; where it is already superfluous, it is found in more and more abundance. Few care to stop to think what the proverb really has to convey.

Before we proceed to examine the underlying sense of this proverb let us divert our attention to 'God' vis-a-vis the world. What is this world and what is God? "Brahma satyam jaganmithyajivo brahmaiva na

aparah', roared the ancient seers. God alone is truth; the world does not exist at all, they said. But, we see it?-posed the uninitiated.

Yes, we see it as we see snake in the rope; as we see water in the mirage; as we see silver in the mother-of-pearl. A man comes home from his office, tired and exhausted and as he steps into his house, he feels that he has trodden a snake. He is not able to examine the thing in the darkness. In that weakened state, his reasoning fails him. His head reels; he is in the grip of fear. He imagines that he has been badly bitten by this snake. He staggers into the house and collapses into the nearest bed. At once a hue and cry-the man has been bitten by the snake! He almost loses consciousness. Crowds of people surrounded his cot. Weeping and wailing; praying and prattling; pandemonium prevails in the house. A seasoned man with flowing grey hairs of wisdom enters and shouts: "Leave the way, let me examine the patient." He gets nearer the bed, and calmly examines the man. Unable to detect any signs of snake-bite, he thinks, his hands combing the long beard, "No, this can't be." He is determined! "Let me see," he says, "Where did the snake bite you?" The dying man feebly answers: "Four yards away from the entrance." With a lantern in hand, the old man sets out on his errand. Of course, the snake if it had bitten him would not be stationary, still. Exactly on the spot mentioned by the patient, there was "the snake". But the flash of light has turned it into an old garland of flowers! Triumphantly, with that garland-snake in hand, the old man returns to the deathbed and with a sagacious twitch playing on his lips, he exhibits the snake to the astounded audience. "This is, my dear man, the snake that bit you. It has no poison-fangs. So, wake up. Change your shirt which is wet with perspiration." The dying man is at once electrified and the pain and fear leave him. Brightly he gets up, embraces his saviour and bids goodbye to the crowd!

That is what the world is. It is a superimposition on Brahman. In essence, it is not there; at least, as what it seems to be. So long as you see it in darkness, it appears as the snake. Light the lamp of wisdom and in its effulgence, the world as such will disappear, and you will perceive the Essence (Brahman in all Its grandeur). Several Tamil saints have conveyed this idea in very beautiful and sublime verses. He who sees God, does not perceive the world made up of the five elements; and who is engrossed in the play of the elements is blinded to the vision of God.

To arrive at the real purport of the proverbs, we should know the context in which that proverb took its birth. Only then can we understand the sense which the letters wish to convey.

A sculptor moves around an old temple, with every one of his senses and the mind absorbed in the beauty of the carvings on the walls of the temple. He feels the tail of a cat; ah, how beautiful it is! There, the mouth of that lion with that stone-ball inside! So, he moves from one carving to another. He takes a turn. "Lo! That huge dog! If only it jumps on me! Look at its sharp teeth; and its bloodthirsty tongue flowing out of its mouth! It is looking directly at me. O my God, what am I to do now?" Perplexed, he closes his eyes. One minute passes, two, three, four. Still the dog is hesitant. "Why, probably it is chained." He throws a small stone at it. It does not move. He goes nearer. Still it stands where it was, staring at him all the time. "Why, it does not even wag its tail. Peculiar dog it must be." He goes yet nearer and touches its tail. His whole body rocks with laughter at his own idiotic behaviour. It is made of stone! Yet, such was the workmanship, the colouring and the art that it actually looks like a living dog. This is what was meant by the poet who said, "When there is the dog, there is no stone; when there is the stone, there is no dog." When you see the dog, there was no idea that it was of stone. When you realise it is made of stone, the idea of dog vanishes! What travesty of truth it is to superimpose all sorts of ludicrous ideas on this proverb which conveys the highest truth! When you see the diversity, Unity

disappears; and vice versa. When you realise God, world disappears; when you lose yourself in the world, you cannot realise God!

This idea is beautifully expressed in many a couplet in Tamil literature. One says: “The elephant screened the wood; and in the wood disappeared the elephant.” It sounds mystic! Take an instance. A young child has an elephant made of mango-wood which he got as a present from his fond parent. A carpenter is working on the verandah. It runs to him and shows the elephant to him. “See, how big are his legs. Look at his winnow-like ears. Booh! The tusks will pierce your chest.” The child plays with it as if it were an elephant in reality. The carpenter takes the doll in his hand and examines it. “Why, child, it is not a good one.” “What, my elephant?” “Yes. It is made of mango-wood. It will get spoiled soon.” To the carpenter, it is not an elephant; but a piece of wood! Such is the difference in the attitude towards the world between the worldly man and a saint. The worldly man sees the world as a diversity, as a mixture of pleasure and pain, as a conglomeration of objects; the saint perceives the one Hidden Essence which pervades the whole universe-to him it is an ‘Abhasa’ of that Existence-Knowledge-Bliss-Absolute, Brahman.

SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA

Born on the 8th September, 1887, in the illustrious family of Sage Appayya Dikshitar and several other renowned saints and savants, Sri Swami Sivananda had a natural flair for a life devoted to the study and practice of Vedanta. Added to this was an inborn eagerness to serve all and an innate feeling of unity with all mankind.

His passion for service drew him to the medical career; and soon he gravitated to where he thought that his service was most needed. Malaya claimed him. He had earlier been editing a health journal and wrote extensively on health problems. He discovered that people needed right knowledge most of all; dissemination of that knowledge he espoused as his own mission.

It was divine dispensation and the blessing of God upon mankind that the doctor of body and mind renounced his career and took to a life of renunciation to qualify for ministering to the soul of man. He settled down at Rishikesh in 1924, practised intense austerities and shone as a great Yogi, saint, sage and Jivanmukta.

In 1932 Swami Sivananda started the Sivanandashram. In 1936 was born The Divine Life Society. In 1948 the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy was organised. Dissemination of spiritual knowledge and training of people in Yoga and Vedanta were their aim and object. In 1950 Swamiji undertook a lightning tour of India and Ceylon. In 1953 Swamiji convened a World Parliament of Religions'. Swamiji is the author of over 300 volumes and has disciples all over the world, belonging to all nationalities, religions and creeds. To read Swamiji's works is to drink at the Fountain of Wisdom Supreme. On 14th July, 1963 Swamiji entered Mahasamadhi.

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